

## Siniora fears influx of Soviets

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — A leading Palestinian said Sunday he feared there would be an influx of Soviet Jews into the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. "We have no business telling the Soviet Union not to allow Jews to emigrate, but we must make it clear that we object to settling them in the occupied territories," Hanna Siniora, editor of Al-Fajr newspaper, told a seminar on Palestinian and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, former Soviet diplomat Natan Sharansky, now an Israeli, said last week that half a million Soviet Jews were waiting to emigrate to Israel. Israeli officials say 2,000 arrived last month and the rate will rise. One right-wing minister has urged them to settle in the occupied territories. Palestinian nationalists at the seminar in Arab Jerusalem said political changes in Eastern Europe were a victory for democracy and could help to promote Middle East peace. But they said they were concerned at an improvement in ties such as cultural relations between Israel and the East Bloc, which has long supported the Palestinian cause.

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## Palestinian shot dead amid calls for strike

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Masked men shot to death a 60-year-old Palestinian Sunday in the occupied West Bank city of Nablus, strewing government permit forms over his body and accusing him of collaborating with Israel, reports said.

It was the second shooting death in the city's casbah (old market) since the army tried to assert control over the neighbourhood of narrow, twisting alleys by killing four members of the radical Black Panthers gang in a raid Dec. 1.

Also Sunday, the Muslim fundamentalist group Hamas declared a general strike on Christmas day in a new leaflet calling for stepping up the two-year Palestinian uprising with attacks on Israeli troops.

"We call on our masses to use firebombs and ambush the occupation's army," said the leaflet.

Last week, the leaders of the uprising called for marches on Dec. 25 to protest Israel's occupation but not for a strike.

The Hamas leaflet also denied Israeli news reports that the group agreed to participate in a Palestinian-Israeli dialogue urged by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. It said the reports were spread by "Zionist news agencies."

Israeli cabinet secretary Eliakim Rubenstein left Sunday for Washington, meanwhile, to hold meetings with U.S. officials about the proposed Israeli-Palestinian dialogue in Cairo.

In Nablus, masked youths fatally shot Khaled Barahmeh in the forehead, then took government permit forms he was carrying and scattered them over his body, reports said.

Barahmeh, from the nearby vil-

lage of Tazua, was accused of being a middleman for Palestinians seeking Israeli permits for business dealings or to travel abroad, the reports said.

Last Thursday, masked youths killed a 30-year-old man in the casbah in the first slaying of an alleged collaborator since the army's attack on the Black Panthers gang. After the Dec. 1 attack, soldiers went through the casbah announcing over loudspeakers that citizens no longer need fear attacks by gang members.

On Friday, masked youths took to the streets with loudspeakers to claim the Black Panthers carried out the slaying a day earlier.

Also Sunday, about 200 women marched through the casbah waving Palestinian flags and shouting "Long live Palestine," reports said. They said that when the women tried to take their march outside the market, soldiers dispersed them.

In the Gaza Strip, meanwhile, officials at Shifa hospital in Gaza City said 20 high school students were treated for beating injuries following a clash with paramilitary border police.

A 14-year-old also was shot in the right foot in the same incident, which began with youngsters stoning soldiers in Gaza City's Tufa quarter, reports said.

Two other boys, one a six-year-old, were shot in a clash with soldiers in Gaza's Jabalya refugee camp, reports and hospital officials said.

Near Jenin in the West Bank, 25-year-old Omar Jirar died when a bomb he was preparing exploded in his hands, Israeli and Palestinian sources said.

Jirar's family home was blown up by Israeli troops in 1973 after his brother was arrested for

alleged anti-Israeli activity, Palestinians said.

Nablus residents said more than 100 students marched through the casbah to the city centre to mark 40 days of mourning for the leader of a Palestinian squad shot dead by Israeli troops.

Supporters of the Palestine Communist Party and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) chanted slogans endorsing Aiman Al Ruzh, head of the PFLP-affiliated "Red Eagles," who was killed in an army raid Nov. 9.

They also lauded Ismail Al Naser, leader of the Black Panthers, who was killed by soldiers Dec. 1.

Israeli government prosecutors accused anti-Arab rabbi Meir Kahane Sunday of inciting racial hatred on the day after a Palestinian forced an Israeli bus into a ravine, killing 16 people.

The indictment said Kahane told a crowd of about 400 people in a Jerusalem park July 7 that Jews who objected to calls for revenge were accomplices in killing the bus passengers.

"Who killed them? The Arabs among us. They are a spreading cancer. Any Jew who says (revenge)... is immoral has the blood of innocents on his hands and is a partner to murder," it quoted the American-born Kahane as saying.

No immediate date was set for a court hearing.

After the July rally, supporters of Kahane's extreme right-wing Kach movement attacked women peace activists demonstrating for an end to Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Kahane's political party was barred from contesting Israel's 1988 general elections after the supreme court ruled it was racist.



Palestinian boys armed with stones await Israeli soldiers in the occupied Gaza Strip

## Hamas says it rejects role in Palestinian-Israeli talks

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Islamic activists in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, in a leaflet distributed Sunday, spurned U.S. and Egyptian efforts to involve them in proposed talks with Israel.

The Islamic resistance movement (Hamas) also warned of retribution against Palestinians who took part in such negotiations.

The leaflet accused Egypt of undermining the Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation and slammed U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's proposals for Israeli-Palestinian talks in Cairo.

"Hamas considers anyone who takes part in negotiations based on the Baker plan as against the will of the Palestinian people and the people will settle accounts with him," it said.

Israeli cabinet secretary Eliyakim Rubenstein left for Washington Sunday to discuss a proposed meeting of Israeli, U.S. and Egyptian foreign ministers on the question of talks.

Diplomatic sources have said the United States, Egypt and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) are working to bring Hamas into a Palestinian delegation for the planned talks in an effort to neutralise its opposition.

The PLO says it supports a Palestinian state alongside Israel, while Hamas regards both Israel and the occupied territories as Arab land to be ruled under Islamic law.

Activist Mahmoud Al Zahar held separate talks last week on possible Hamas participation with Ahmad Tawfik, an aide to Egyptian ambassador Mohamed Bassiouny, and Brigadier Arieh Shiffman, head of the Israeli occupation administration in the Gaza Strip.

Palestinian sources said Zahar told Tawfik that Hamas was ready in principle to join negotiations on Palestinian self-rule and take part in elections to choose the negotiators.

The Hamas leaflet, in an apparent reference to Zahar, told

Palestinians to ignore those claiming to represent it.

"Hamas stresses at this stage people should relate to its political positions only according to the official leaflets and that nobody now inside occupied Palestine represents Hamas publicly," it said.

Israeli sources said the leaflet might be an attempt by Hamas to raise the price of its participation in talks to four or five seats on a twelve-man delegation rather than the one or two so far offered by the PLO.

PLO activists in Jerusalem told Reuters they believed the leaflet should be taken at face value.

"This fits absolutely with their stated ideology. I think they mean what they say," said a supporter of the Palestine Communist Party.

Jailed Hamas activists led by spiritual leader Sheikh Ahmad Yassin go on trial next week in the Gaza Strip on charges including the murder of two kidnapped Israeli soldiers.

## Mubarak envoy visits Damascus

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — An Egyptian minister paid a breakthrough visit to Syria Sunday after more than a decade of soured relations over Cairo's separate treaty with Israel.

President Hafez Al Assad told Egyptian Information Minister Safwat Sharif that Damascus wanted to heal the rift, presidential spokesman Joubran Kourieh reported.

"President Assad affirmed Syria's keen interest to strengthen cooperation with Egypt in all fields to serve the interests of both countries and the Arab Nation," he said.

Ties between the two countries began to improve after Assad met Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak at an Arab League summit in Morocco in May. On Tuesday an Egyptian airliner landed in Damascus, restoring an air link broken 10 years earlier.

Sharif, the first Egyptian minister to visit Syria for more than 12 years, said: "With God's will, we will continue the march towards joint Arab action."

Asked by a reporter whether diplomatic relations would soon be restored, he said the two governments had made a breakthrough in relations which amounted to more than diplomatic ties.

Sharif said when he arrived at Damascus airport that the rapprochement started "when the two leaders met in Casablanca is continuing permanently and we are all witnessing the positive developments between the two

countries."

Assad and Mubarak met in the Moroccan city last May during an Arab summit conference. They met twice in October and agreed to build economic ties in agriculture, oil and industry.

Syria and Libya are the only Arab countries which have not restored relations with Egypt, broken because of the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli treaty.

Egypt's ties with Libya are also improving. Mubarak has met Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi twice in the past two months.

Jibril Kourieh said the Syrian president "will dispatch a personal envoy to President Mubarak within the next few days."

The Egyptian envoy, accompanied by senior officials of Cairo's Foreign Ministry, delivered a letter from Mubarak to Assad, who in turn gave Sharif a letter to deliver to Mubarak. Sharif flew back to Cairo later Sunday.

Syria's press hailed a new era in relations.

"The Syrian-Egyptian rapprochement serves Arab solidarity, which has become a national necessity in light of the increasing Zionist challenge and international developments," said the daily Tishreen.

Al Baath, organ of Syria's ruling Baath Party, said Arab solidarity was at hand in response to "the strategy of enemies who are trying to break Arab ranks."

Al Thawra said the dangers and challenges facing the Arab World made better relations with Egypt necessary.

## American soldier shot dead in Panama

PANAMA CITY (Agencies) — A U.S. soldier was fatally shot Saturday night as he and other American servicemen tried to flee a crowd of Panamanian troops and civilians, a U.S. southern command spokesman reported.

The Panamanian Defence Forces (PDF) said Sunday that the U.S. servicemen had fired several shots at the military headquarters of Manuel Antonio Noriega, wounding three Panamanians, including a soldier and a one-year-old girl. U.S. officials said the Americans were unarmed.

Panama declared war on the United States last week, but U.S. officials brushed off the statement.

U.S. and Panamanian troops went on alert after Saturday's incident, the most serious in a series of confrontations between the two forces. American troops in battle gear could be seen around Fort Clayton, and tanks were heading toward the base. Several unidentified helicopters flew over the city shortly after midnight.

A U.S. spokesman, Ronald Sconyers, said four off-duty American soldiers in civilian clothes were stopped by about 40 civilians and five PDF troopers as they were driving by military headquarters.

The spokesman said the crowd tried to pull the Americans out of the car, and as the U.S. soldiers drove off shots were fired at the car, wounding one of the Americans. He said the other U.S. servicemen were not injured.

The wounded American was taken to the U.S. military's Gorgas Hospital where he died, Sconyers said.

The shooting happened a day after Panama's National Assembly unanimously declared the country was in a state of war with the United States and granted Noriega wide-ranging powers which formalised his rule.

Tensions have been high between the United States and Panama since rebel troops and junior officers on Oct. 3 failed in a coup attempt against Noriega, whom Washington wants removed from power.

The general has been indicted in the United States for drug trafficking, but he denies the charges.

After the coup attempt, President George Bush was criticised by opponents for not seizing an opportunity to force out Noriega, who stayed in charge although the rebels at one point broadcast they had toppled the general.

In the coup attempt, U.S. troops based in Panama blocked roads to the PDF headquarters. U.S. officials denied any role in the attempt but said they knew in advance a coup was being planned.

who no longer have the confidence of their electorate — meaning hardline Communists.

Party leader Karel Urbanek Sunday told a special Slovak party congress in Bratislava that "discredited people" must be weeded out.

Many old hardline leaders have already been removed from the party's ruling politburo and central committee ahead of an emergency national party congress in Prague Wednesday and Thursday.

A professor who addressed the massed students before their march Sunday applauded them for choosing non-violent means to press their demands.

"As there was a film about Gandhi, so one day there will be a film about these events," he said.



The mothers, sisters and children of 34 Palestinian men from the West Bank town of Beit Sahour, jailed for non-payment of taxes to the occupation authorities, demonstrate in Jerusalem demanding the release of the detainees.

## Delhi promises to repeal anti-Sikh terrorism laws

NEW DELHI (Agencies) — India's new government promised Sunday to repeal laws directed against Sikh militants and to punish instigators of anti-Sikh riots five years ago.

Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh called an all-party meeting in New Delhi to draw up a peace plan for the northern state, where more than 1,900 people have died in Sikh separatist violence this year.

A joint statement after the meeting called for "a fresh approach" to resolve the Punjab problem on an enduring basis. But hardline Sikh leaders elected to parliament in last month's general elections did not show up for the talks.

Simranjit Singh Mann, released from prison two weeks ago, demanded the government first release Sikh detainees, repeal anti-terrorist laws and punish anti-Sikh rioters.

The joint statement met at least two of those conditions by calling for repeal of the laws and prosecution of the rioters.

Prime Minister Singh, who took office two weeks ago, told reporters after the meeting he was confident the hardliners would attend the next round of Punjab talks.

Singh said he would proceed

step by step to find peace in Punjab: "This may be slow but the solution will be lasting."

"While serious efforts to find a political solution continue, the people must be reassured that there would be no let up in the fight against terrorism," said a statement issued after the meeting. It was endorsed by all but one of the participating parties.

Former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's Congress Party distanced itself from the statement, saying it could not be considered a consensus document since the party had no part in drafting it.

About 40 leaders of 21 parties attended the meeting, which lasted nearly five hours, a government spokesman said.

Two main Sikh parties, the Akali Dal-Mann and Akali Dal-Badal, did not attend, saying a congenial atmosphere must be created in the state before discussions can be held.

The Akali Dal-Mann party, which is known to be supported by Sikh extremist groups, won a landslide in last month's general elections. It took nine of the 13 parliamentary seats allotted to the state.

Kashmir violence

Meanwhile, militant Muslim separatists, who traded an Indian cabinet minister's daughter for

five of their jailed colleagues, vowed to continue hitting Indian targets in the disputed Jammu-Kashmir state, a leader said Sunday.

Amanullah Khan, chairman of the Pakistan-based Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front, said the separatists will wage an 18-month-old campaign to terror, including hijacking, killings and more kidnappings.

The front, was formed in 1965, wants Jammu-Kashmir to secede from India and either become independent or join Pakistan. The northwestern Indian state is part of a larger Kashmir, which was split into two parts after 1948, with half under India's control and half under Pakistan's.

The front's underground guerrilla force operating in Indian-controlled Jammu-Kashmir has been given guidelines by the organisation's leaders, Khan told a news conference in Rawalpindi, Pakistan.

"They have been told: Don't touch our own people, but hit Indian property, including airlines, post offices, public buildings," said Khan. "There have been dozens and dozens of bomb blasts" in the Indian state during the past 18 months, he said.

"Basically our military needs are being met," Khan said.

## Rocard plans to meet Israelis, Palestinians

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — French Premier M. Michel Rocard arrived here Sunday to attend a ceremony naming a Jaffa Street after former French Prime Minister Pierre Mendes-France.

The ceremony will be Monday. Mendes-France, a Jew and a strong supporter of Israel, died in 1962.

Upon his arrival at Ben-Gurion international airport, Rocard described his trip as a private visit. "I have not come to deal with the question of peace between the Palestinians and Israel," he told reporters.

Rocard is scheduled to meet with Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and Vice-Premier Shimon Peres before leaving Israel Monday afternoon.

Rocard will also meet Palestinian leaders during the visit.

Despite public expressions of friendship on both sides, Israel and France are deeply at odds over a role for the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in Middle East peace efforts.

"Mendes-France was very much involved in trying to build

bridges between all peoples. Vietnamese and French, Arabs and French, Arabs and Jews," French Ambassador Alain Pierret told Reuters.

In addition to Shamir, Peres, Foreign Minister Moshe Arens, President Chaim Herzog, Rocard will also meet Palestinian activists, the ambassador said.

When Shamir paid an official visit to Paris last month, French leaders voiced open scepticism of Israeli proposals that reject any role for the PLO and rule out a future Palestinian state.

Shamir accused France of having a pro-Palestinian and pro-Arab stance.

Israel was angry when French President Francois Mitterrand officially received PLO leader Yasser Arafat for the first time this year.

Mitterrand also caused "offence" by accusing Israeli soldiers of treating Palestinians as "wild game."

Euro-Arab conference

A top PLO official, Farouk

## Chanting students keep up pressure in Prague

PRAGUE (Agencies) — Tens of thousands of Czechoslovak students shouting "Long live Havel" marched through central Prague Sunday to keep up the pressure for democratic reform.

The rally was called to honour fellow students injured in a march a month ago.

Police brutality against the students on that occasion sparked outrage and mass political upheaval which has since ended the Communist Party's unchallenged grip on power.

As on Nov. 17, tens of thousands of students gathered in a square which is surrounded by buildings of Prague University.

They chanted or carried banners proclaiming "Havel to the castle," supporting playwright Vaclav Havel as their choice to be the next occupant of Prague

Castle, the seat of Czechoslovakia's president (see page 8).

A month ago, Havel was little more than a symbol of opposition to Communist rule. Now he is a popular hero.

"A month ago, from this place, we began the destruction of the regime — without knowing it," students' leader Martin Klimek said to laughter and applause before the march set off.

With a rallying cry of "Long live Havel," the marchers set off slowly and calmly.

No police were in evidence and many passers-by joined the students as the march snaked towards the city centre.

Roman Catholic priest Vac-

lav Havel, stripped of his state license for preaching after signing the human rights Charter 77, spoke under the baroque vaulted ceiling of St. Mar-

garet's Basilica.

Hundreds of Roman Catholic faithful who could not get inside stood in the rain to hear Havel's first public mass in 11 years.

The mass was dedicated to the peaceful student rally Nov. 17.

Maly said he decided to serve mass Sunday to commemorate the start of the democratic revolution and out of respect for the students' leading role.

"I appreciate the willingness of the students to sacrifice, because it is a forgotten value," Maly told reporters after mass.

At the start of the service, Maly, bathed in television spotlights, received a one-minute ovation.

Switching to English halfway

through his sermon, Maly said: "You can experience here an alive church that... doesn't wish to master, to rule society, but a searching church, searching for God's truth."

The students have been on strike since the police action against them on Nov. 17 and intend to maintain the pressure for greater democracy.

A mass picket of parliament is planned for Tuesday, when members of the federal assembly are expected to extend a deadline for choosing a new head of state to replace president Gustav Husak, who resigned last Sunday.

Deputies in the communist-dominated parliament would be "besieged," one student leader said Sunday.

The opposition has called for the replacement of deputies



## Iraq ready to swap ailing PoWs

**BAGHDAD (Agencies)** — A senior official said Sunday Iraq is willing to exchange all ailing and disabled prisoners of war with Iran, ending a year-old impasse.

But the fate of nearly 100,000 captives held by both sides remained deadlocked. Some have been prisoners since the early days of the Gulf war that broke out in September 1980.

Akram Al Witr, chief of the Legal Department in Iraq's Foreign Ministry, said Iraq's response to a proposal by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to exchange all ailing and wounded prisoners was "positive".

But Witr, the chief Iraqi negotiator with the Red Cross, said he will give Baghdad's official answer soon.

He noted that Iraq has no objection to repatriating all sick and wounded prisoners it captured during the eight-year Gulf war if Iran does the same.

Witr spoke after meeting Saturday with Angelo Gnadinger, the ICRC's Middle East chief, who is visiting Baghdad to finalise the plan.

Iraq's foreign minister, Ali Akbar Velayati, said Friday that Tehran will soon free wounded and ailing Iraqi prisoners un-

ilaterally in hopes that Baghdad would reciprocate.

He did not say how many captives would be released or when, but his offer raised hopes that it might open the door to an exchange of a larger scale.

It was not clear if an exchange of ailing captives would signal movement on peace talks that have been deadlocked since April.

Iraq has refused to discuss a complete exchange of PoWs until Iraq withdraws its forces from border territory they seized in the final phase of the Gulf war fighting before a U.N.-sponsored ceasefire took effect Aug. 20, 1988.

Iraq wants all prisoners of war to be repatriated before it will discuss other issues in the U.N. Security Council's ceasefire resolution.

Witr stressed Sunday that Iraq still demands the immediate release of all prisoners of war taken by the two countries.

The Red Cross has registered some 50,000 prisoners held by Iran and more than 19,200 in

Iraqi camps. But United Nations officials and diplomats estimate the two sides hold around 100,000 PoWs between them.

Gnadinger, who arrived in Baghdad Thursday after visiting Tehran, declined comment on his talks with Iraqi officials.

He was expected to meet Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz later Sunday to discuss the PoWs issue.

The Red Cross secured an agreement by Baghdad and Tehran to repatriate ailing prisoners following the ceasefire.

But the agreement collapsed in November 1988 after only 400 men had been exchanged, with both sides accusing each other of falsifying the number of captives who were seeking asylum.

The stalemate in the PoW issue has been a factor in the deadlock peace talks that began five days after the ceasefire took effect.

Iraq has demanded Iran observe article 118 of the Third Geneva Convention, which both countries signed and which requires that all PoWs be freed as soon as hostilities cease.

Iraq also insists that the PoW issue should be treated as a humanitarian matter and not linked to the outcome of the peace talks.

The Red Cross is trying to

convince both sides to uncouple the PoWs issue from the political negotiations, which some officials fear could take years to reach a settlement, if ever.

Meanwhile Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati accused Iraq Sunday of blocking U.N.-sponsored peace talks in the hope of territorial concessions.

"The Iraqi regime, by hindering the process of the peace talks, was after getting concessions from Iran but the Islamic Republic of Iran is determined to firmly resist any Iraqi ambition," he told the Iranian News Agency (IRNA).

Velayati was speaking in Tehran on his return from talks in New York with U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar. Aziz said Thursday Iran had a "selective, opportunistic" attitude to ceasefire terms.

Aziz and Velayati held separate unsuccessful talks with Perez de Cuellar last week to try to replace the August 1988 Gulf war ceasefire with a definitive settlement.

Velayati said the United Nations had rejected an Iraqi proposal for the establishment of expert committees to work out a permanent settlement.

## Radicals win parliament seats in Iran

**NICOSIA (AP)** — Iran's former interior minister, Ali Akbar Mohtashemi, and other anti-Western radicals have won parliamentary seats in special elections, strengthening their opposition to President Hashemi Rafsanjani's liberalisation policy.

The official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA), monitored in Nicosia, reported late Saturday that Mohtashemi, a middle-ranking cleric, took 225,570 votes in polling Friday and was declared elected to one of the 32 Tehran seats in the Majlis, or parliament.

Another hardline cleric, Hojatollah Movahedi Kermani, was also elected in Tehran with 287,921 votes, IRNA reported.

Diplomats said the mid-term elections were seen as a test for Rafsanjani's policies.

Sixty-four candidates ran in the poll called to fill nine vacant seats in the 270-member parliament. Iran's official media reported a heavy turnout, but gave no overall figures.

Most of the seats were left empty when Rafsanjani appointed legislators to his

cabinet following his election July 28.

He had held one of the Tehran seats since 1980 until he resigned from parliament to run for president.

In the last general election in April-May 1988, he polled a record 1.2 million votes.

Tehran Radio said four other candidates, including lesser-known radicals, won seats in provincial centres.

The state radio, also monitored in Nicosia, said that there were no clear-cut winners in two other Tehran districts and the provincial Bandar Turkman constituency

so a second round of voting will be held. It did not say what that will be.

The frontrunners for the remaining Tehran seats are all radicals — former Commerce Minister Habibollah Asgari, former Labour Minister Abolhasan Sarafzadeh and former Posts and Telegraphs Minister Morteza Nabavi.

Mohtashemi's election marked a comeback for the 43-year-old Islamic fundamentalist who has close links with pro-Iranian mili-

tant holding Western hostages in Lebanon.

Rafsanjani, leader of Tehran's so-called pragmatists, dumped Mohtashemi and other hardliners in August, when he formed a cabinet dominated by technocrats designed to revitalise Iran's moribund economy following last year's ceasefire in the eight-year war with Iraq.

Mohtashemi is allied with Ahmad Khomeini, son of the late revolutionary leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and considered a focal point for the radicals espousing the ayatollah's ideological legacy.

The hardliners oppose Rafsanjani's moves to improve Iran's relations with the West to acquire badly needed investment to crank up the post-war economy.

They contend his policies move too far from the fundamentalist principles that form the bedrock of the 1979 Islamic revolution.

Rafsanjani, while no less committed to the revolution than his rivals, believes Iran cannot afford to remain isolated and that its 55 million people have had enough of hardship after a decade of

turmoil and war.

But he needs to avoid a major challenge while he cements his authority and has had to tread softly since his election.

Radicals of various stripes already dominate the Majlis and their gains are likely to further inhibit Rafsanjani's room for manoeuvre between guiding Iran into a more open, prosperous era while preserving Islamic principles.

The Tehran Times daily, which is considered to reflect Rafsanjani's thinking, indicated Sunday that the president may seek a conciliatory line with his radical rivals.

IRNA quoted the newspaper as saying in an editorial that Mohtashemi's election will "only enrich the Majlis debates and assist decision-making."

It castigated the Western media for highlighting political differences in the Tehran hierarchy and said these "in no way keep those who believe in the Islamic Republic and the lofty goals set for this Muslim society from fully cooperating with one another."

## GCC summit faces major unsolved problems

**MUSCAT (R)** — Leaders of six Gulf Arab states start their tenth summit this week looking forward to the challenge of the 1990s but dogged by unsolved disputes from this decade.

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) was founded in 1981, the year after Iran and Iraq went to war. A U.N.-sponsored ceasefire ended fighting in August 1988 but talks to bring lasting peace to the region have made almost no progress.

GCC Secretary General Abdullah Bishara, quoted by the Oman News Agency Saturday, called the "no peace, no war" situation unsatisfactory both for the region and the world.

Bishara said the issue would be a major topic. Iranian political sources said Tehran feared the GCC would lean in favour of Baghdad. But Arab political analysts said the summit would probably take an even-handed position.

Bishara said the summit would be particularly important because of its timing at the turn of the decade. He said it would be one of reassessment and determination, describing the 1990s as a decade of new challenges for the six-nation group.

Leaders of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Qatar and Oman, expected to start meeting Mon-

day, will also grapple with Lebanon and the Palestinian uprising.

Saudi Arabia played a key role in Arab League efforts for a political solution to Lebanon's 15-year civil war. Rene Muwawad, elected president as part of a peace accord, was assassinated in November and his successor Elias Hrawi is locked in dispute with defiant army General Michel Aoun.

The Palestinian uprising against Israel in the occupied territories dragged into its third year this month. The GCC is expected to reaffirm support for the Palestine Liberation Organisation as the Palestinians' sole representative, a position Israel fiercely rejects.

GCC states are also facing unaccustomed political change on their doorstep. In the remote south of the Arabian peninsula, North and South Yemen are emerging from isolation and planning a unified state.

North Yemen has also joined Egypt, Jordan, and Iraq in the Arab Cooperation Council, a new economic grouping which has assured the GCC that it has no political ambitions.

Bishara said the six leaders were determined to promote common interests and ties between their nationals through new economic and trade agreements and joint companies.

## Modrow: East Germany wants ties with Israel

**TEL AVIV (R)** — East German Prime Minister Hans Modrow was quoted Sunday as saying his government had asked to establish relations with Israel for the first time.

Israel said it had yet to receive the request, reported by the newspaper Haaretz, but would take it seriously if East Germany shared responsibility for the Nazi extermination of six million Jews in the Holocaust of World War II.

Modrow told Haaretz in an interview: "We asked Israel officially to consider establishing diplomatic ties. My government is interested in these relations and I hope the answer from Israel will be positive."

Official Israeli sources told Reuters that, once Israel received the request, it would insist that East Germany announced its readiness to pay reparations, as did West Germany, to families of Holocaust victims and survivors.

Asked if East Germany would pay compensation, Modrow said: "We are certainly ready to consider the matter with authorised representatives of Jewish organisations involved and with Israel."

"My government is open to talks on the matter and it is an inseparable part of the matters which we will have to consider."

The Soviet Union under Mikhail Gorbachev and other Soviet Bloc countries have gradually restored some of the ties they severed with Israel over the 1967 Middle East war. East Germany has never had ties with Israel.

East German Communist Party leader Gregor Gysi told Haaretz: "The German past imposes on us a special obligation (towards Israel)."

He added that he had been invited to a Hebrew University forum in March but did not know whether he would attend.

## MIDDLE EAST NEWS BRIEFS

### Sudan hangs black-marketeer

**KHARTOUM (R)** — A Sudanese businessman was hanged Sunday for illegally possessing foreign currency in the first reported execution under the junta which seized power in June. Magdy Mahgoub was executed at Khartoum's Kobar Prison in defiance of a strongly-worded appeal from the United States seeking reprieves for people sentenced to death by military courts. A doctor accused of leading a strike by colleagues is also under sentence of death along with other currency offenders and an Egyptian convicted of possessing heroin. A senior government official said junta leader General Omar Hassan Al Bashir had confirmed the sentence on the Egyptian, Said Ahmad Gaballah. Bashir on Thursday vowed to strike with an iron fist against people he said were trying to sabotage the economy. United Nations Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar has urged Bashir to reprieve the doctor.

### Israeli airman held by Iranians

**TEL AVIV (AP)** — The wife of an Israeli airman captured three years ago in Lebanon said Sunday she has been told he was still alive and held by Iranians. Tami Arad, spoke in interviews with Israeli Radio stations from Paris, where she was attending a conference on human rights in Arab countries in hopes of sending a message to her husband, Ron, whom she has not heard from in two years. Arad, an air navigator, was shot down with an F-4 Phantom fighter jet during an Israeli bombing mission in southern Lebanon on Oct. 16, 1986. The pilot of the plane was rescued by Israeli troops. At the time Arad was said to be in the hands of the Shi'ite Muslim Amal faction, but later he was reported being held by an Iranian-backed breakaway of Amal. There are about 2,600 Iranian Revolutionary Guards in Lebanon, around Baalbek in the east and in Beirut's southern slums.

### Driver foils attempt on Syrian diplomat

**BRUSSELS (R)** — A senior Syrian diplomat in Brussels has escaped injury when a sharp-eyed embassy chauffeur noticed two grenades fixed under his car and raised the alarm. Belgium's national news agency Belga said later an anonymous caller claimed responsibility for the failed car bomb attack in the name of "the Survivors of Hama," a group apparently linked to Syria's fundamentalist Muslim brothers. Syria's ambassador to Belgium, Siba Nasser, named the diplomat as First Secretary Anwar Al Fadel, 40, who is in charge of consular affairs at the Brussels embassy. He told Reuters the chauffeur was driving past by chance, spotted the car parked on a busy street where Al Fadel had stopped to do some shopping and noticed the grenades attached under the driver's seat. A police spokesman said the grenades were fitted to their pins would drop out with the motion of the car. One was on the verge of exploding when police defused the devices, he said.

### Tunisian parties hold talks

**TUNIS (R)** — The leaders of three Tunisian opposition parties have held formal talks that could be the first step towards a left-of-centre alliance. The secretaries general of the Movement of Socialist Democrats (MDS), Tunisian Communist Party and Popular Unity Movement (MUP) met Friday and called for a "broad democratic and popular movement capable of defending the interests of the country," a joint statement issued Saturday said. The MDS is the largest of Tunisia's six recognised opposition groups.

## Afghan army offensive repulsed, rebels say

**ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)** — U.S.-backed insurgents claimed Sunday that they killed 50 Afghan troops when they repulsed a recent government offensive west of Kabul, the Afghan capital.

MEDIA, a joint guerrilla news agency, also reported heavy losses on both sides in clashes up north near the Soviet border. The agency said rebels killed 20 officers and 30 soldiers, and destroyed three tanks and five other military vehicles.

The three-day battle, which began Dec. 11, started when government troops attacked guerrilla positions in the Paghman Heights overlooking the capital, it said.

The agency said in a dispatch by telex that government troops were driven back to within 10 kilometres of Kabul. It said two rebels and two civilians were killed in the fighting.

Official Afghan media have not reported any such offensive but Radio Kabul, monitored in Islamabad, said on Dec. 15 that government forces found and destroyed 50 rebel rockets in the Paghman area.

Western diplomats in Islamabad previously reported that the guerrillas seized an important government stronghold in Paghman in early November, and have fought off several army thrusts to retake it.

MEDIA also said Sunday that "both sides have sustained considerable losses" in clashes on Dec. 6 and 8 in Daulatabad in northern Balkh province, about 45 kilometres south of the Soviet border.

It claimed that 22 government troops and militiamen were killed and 20 deserted to the Mujahadeen, or Islamic holy warriors, as the rebels call themselves.

The agency said the government responded with "indiscriminate" bombing and shelling which killed 20 rebels and civilians, including two guerrilla commanders. It said 40 others were wounded, and that the fighting continued.

Such a level of combat in northern Afghanistan is unusual for the onset of winter, when snow blocks mountain passes and generally forces a seasonal lull.

The ruling People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan seized power in a bloody 1978 military coup which sparked the insurgency. Soviet forces ended nine years of direct intervention in the war last Feb. 15 but Moscow continues to back the Kabul government through a massive military airlift and overland convoys.

Despite predictions of their early defeat, government forces continue to hold Afghanistan's major cities. The Mujahadeen, who receive U.S.-supplied weapons through Pakistan, reportedly control most of the rugged countryside.

Rebels refuse to negotiate peace with the Kabul government, which they consider to be a puppet of Moscow. They have pledged to fight until they topple it, and establish an Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

## Turkey sees goodwill as key to better ties with Syria

**ANKARA (R)** — Syria has a long-term interest in smoothing over disputes with its northern neighbour Turkey, officials in Ankara believe.

Ties have been hit by Turkey's belief that Syria is helping Kurdish rebels. Syrian concern over its Euphrates River water lifeline and the downing by Syrian MiGs of a plane over Turkey.

But an official Turkish source said better relations were in Syria's interests. "They can't fight on all fronts. They are going to need our goodwill," he said.

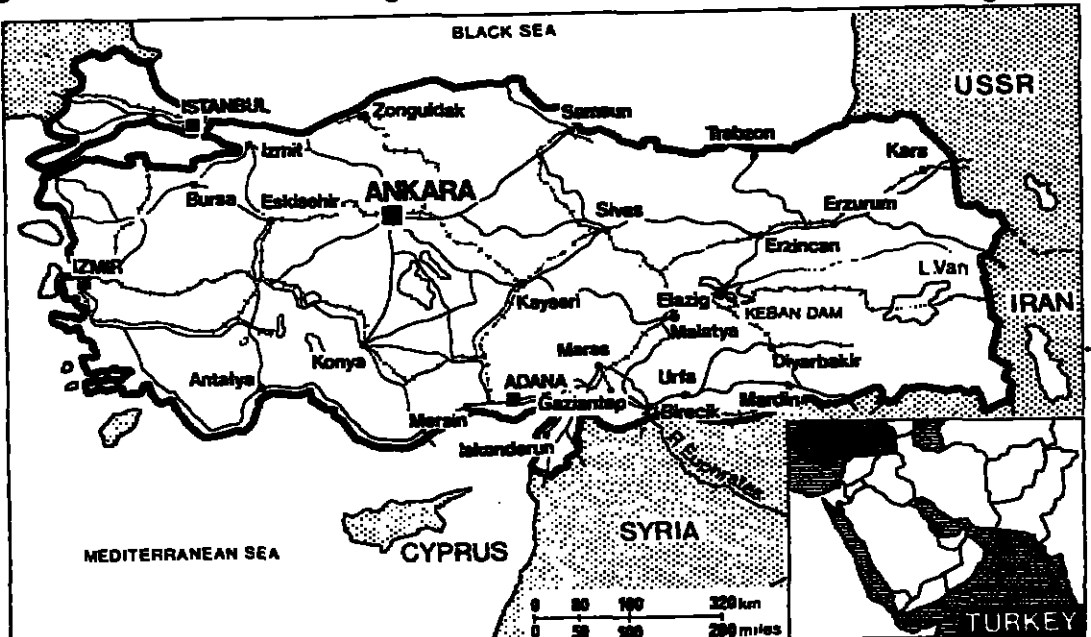
"Turkey sees advantages in promoting ties with Syria. It is our biggest border of 900 kilometres."

Turkey treads warily with Syria, which is at political odds with Iraq to the east, has troops in Lebanon to the west and keeps the cream of its armed forces facing Israel in the south.

Turkey appeared heartened by talks in Ankara this month, which it described as "very honest and very useful."

"The Syrians know our concerns. They stem from events aimed at endangering our territorial integrity and security," one source said, referring to cross-border Kurdish rebel attacks.

Security sources say groups of



up to 30 guerrillas of the Marxist Kurdish Workers Party (PKK), whose violent independence campaign has caused some 2,000 deaths, were still crossing the frontier in south eastern Turkey, also bordering Iran and Iraq.

"The Syrians have taken some steps which we appreciate but we say it is not enough. We must have evidence that people will

not be able to commit atrocities," the official source said.

Security sources said Syria about a year ago detained an assistant to PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan, who has moved from Damascus to Lebanon's Syrian-controlled Bekaa Valley.

Turkey is seeking a more effective barrier along the border,

marked for the most part by an ageing concrete and barbed wire fence lined by Turkish watchtowers.

Damascus has complained about border incidents such as smuggling and the shooting of farmers, possibly in the mistaken belief that they were Kurdish rebels.

## JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 77311-19	
PROGRAMME ONE	
15:30	Korona
15:45	Programme review
15:55	Children's programmes
16:05	News summary in Arabic
16:15	World News
16:25	Local programme
16:40	Programme review
16:50	News in Arabic
17:10	Arabic series
17:30	Programme review
17:40	Local programme
17:50	News summary in Arabic
PROGRAMME TWO	
18:30	Des Chiffres et de lettres
18:40	L'Appart
18:50	News in French
19:15	Weekly Sport magazine
19:30	News in Hebrew
19:45	Varieties
20:15	Golden Girls
21:10	
On-air: The Richest Man in the World	
22:00	News in English
22:20	The Alamo: 13 days to Victory
PRAYER TIMES	
05:00	Fajr
05:20	(Sunrise) Duha
11:30	Dhuhr
14:15	'Asr
16:35	Maghrib
18:50	Isha

CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweidat Tel. 810740	
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624990	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 623666	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541	
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 628543	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261	
Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 653526	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811255	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817, 654932	
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
Some clouds appear at different altitudes and another rise in temperatures is expected. Winds will be light and variable. In Amman, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.	

# GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Radio Jordan ..... 774111  
 Water Authority ..... 690100  
 Jordan Electricity Authority ..... 815615  
 Electric Power  
     Company ..... 636381  
 RJ Flight Information ..... 06-53200  
 Queen Alia Intl. Airport ..... 06-53200

## HOSPITALS

**AMMAN:**  
 Russian Medical Centre ..... 813813/32  
 Khaldi Maternity, J. Amn. .... 644281/6  
 Azzeh Maternity, J. Amn. .... 644412/2  
 Jabal Amman Maternity ..... 642662  
 Malhas, J. Amman ..... 636140  
 Palestine, Shmeisani ..... 664171/4  
 Shmeisani Hospital ..... 669131  
 University Hospital ..... 843845  
 Al-Mustashfi Hospital ..... 66727/9  
 The Islamic, Abdali ..... 666127/7  
 Al-Ahli, Abdali ..... 664164/6  
 Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafiah ..... 775111/26  
 Queen Alia Hospital ..... 602240/50  
 Aqsa Hospital ..... 674155

**ZARQA:**  
 Zarqa Govt. Hospital ..... (09)983237  
 Zarqa National Hospital ..... (09)991071  
 Ibn Sina Hospital ..... (09)986732

**ERBIL:**  
 Princess Summa Hospital ..... (02)275535  
 Greek Catholic Hospital ..... (02)272275  
 Ibn Ali Nadhes Hospital ..... (02)24710  
**AQABA:**  
 Princess Haya Hospital ..... (03)314111

## FOR THE TRAVELLER

### QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

*This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)53200-5, where it should always be verified.*

## ARRIVALS

### Royal Jordanian (R.J.) Flights (Terminal 1)

07-45	.....	Beghdad (RJ)
09-30	.....	Damascus (RJ)
09-30	.....	Sanaa (RJ)
09-30	.....	Cairo (RJ)
09-45	.....	Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10-30	.....	Dhahran, Kuwait (RJ)
10-15	.....	Amman (RJ)
11-15	.....	Aqaba (RJ)



## Al Hussein Society holds annual charity bazaar

AMMAN (Petra) — The Al Hussein Society for the Rehabilitation of the Physically Handicapped held its annual charity bazaar Sunday at the Amman Marriott Hotel under the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath.

On display were embroideries, handicrafts by handicapped students of Al Hussein Centre as well as ceramics, artificial flowers, silver and brassware, leather, perfumes, and various foods and confectioneries prepared by ladies representing foreign embassies in Jordan.

Participating embassies were those of the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Spain, the United States, Turkey, Japan, Sweden, Morocco, Egypt, Greece, South Korea, Iraq, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, the Philippines, Brazil, Tunisia, Indonesia, and Pakistan in addition to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Accompanying Princess Sarvath at the opening ceremony were Princess Majdah Ra'd, the society's president and a group of foreign and Jordanian ladies.

The proceeds of the bazaar will benefit the Al Hussein Society which was founded in 1971 to care for orphaned children. In 1979 it opened its doors to the physically handicapped.

The society's endeavours culminated in the construction of the Amman Centre for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Physically Handicapped which was opened in 1984 by His Majesty King Hussein.

The centre has a team of 10 volunteers and 40 permanent staff, some of whom are seconded from different government ministries.

Over 100 boys, girls and young adults who are unable to attend ordinary schools, including 40 resident students and 15 partially self-supportive youths are cared for in the centre.

In addition, the centre invites out-patients to share in full-time and part-time education.

The centre has an elementary school in addition to other facilities such as the treatment pool, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and a medical clinic, as well as an orthopaedic workshop where wheelchair repairs are carried out.

The society is a voluntary, non-profit-making charity organisation which depends totally on donated funds.



Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath Sunday opens the annual charity bazaar organised by Al Hussein Society for the Physically Handicapped (Petra photo)

## Taiwanese aide praises Jordan as region's major stabilising force

By Mariam M. Shahin  
Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — The administrative Vice-minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Taiwan Chien-Jen Chen, concluded a three-day visit to Jordan Sunday, describing His Majesty King Hussein as a leader with great wisdom and courage, and Jordan and its people as very impressive.

Chen said the visit, which is part of a tour of Arab countries including Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Bahrain, offered him a first-hand opportunity to see how Arab countries have developed. Most people are probably not aware of the development and sophistication that exists in the Arab World and particularly in Jordan," he said.

"One has to come and see for oneself. I am truly very impressed."

The vice minister, who was recently appointed as head of the Middle Eastern section in Taipei's Foreign Ministry, told the Jordan Times that his mission to the areas was two-fold. "I am here on an educational tour; I want to see the people and places that I will be dealing with first hand," he said.

"I also want to strengthen relations with our friends in this part of the world." "Taipei and Amman have enjoyed excellent relations ever since His Majesty came to Taiwan in the late 1950s. The Crown Prince subsequently visited us twice. We consider Jordan not only as just a good friend but also a major stabilising force in the region," the minister said.

Chen pointed out that trade relations between Taiwan and Jordan survived the severance in diplomatic relations between the two countries when

Jordan recognised the People's Republic of China. Taiwan ranks number 13 in the world's leading trading nations, Chen pointed out. "We have trade agreements with Jordan worth about \$79 million at this time, but that could be increased easily with help from both sides," he added.

Jordanian imports, mostly of consumer goods such as garments, electronics and plastic products, make up about \$46 million of the total, while the Kingdom mainly exports phosphates to Taiwan.

Chen said that Taiwan was involved in two industrial ventures in Jordan, both in the garment industry. One of them recently expanded from being a \$3 million venture to a \$10 million business.

Chen also said he would like to see Jordanian businessmen make more of an effort to strengthen trade relations. "I would like to see some Jordanian businessmen at the Taipei import fair (Aug. 23-Sept. 5 1990). They have to become more outgoing. They have to make the personal contacts. They have to be there," he said.

that only a few hundred Taiwanese travel to Jordan as tourists every year out of the nearly two million who travel outside Taiwan each year. "With the proper promotion we could encourage much more of our people to visit Jordan," according to Chen.

"Tourism will bring about friendlier relations, better understanding and an increase in trade," he noted.

The vice minister is on his first trip to Jordan and met and discussed possibilities of increased economic cooperation with Her Majesty Queen Noor, the ministers of culture, planning, and youth as well as the acting foreign minister.

Chen said that he greatly admired the courage and wisdom with which King Hussein carried out the recent political changes in the country and the process of democratisation of Jordan. "This reaffirms and strengthens Jordan's role as a stable and progressive country," he said.

Praising on-going efforts by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan to keep alive diplomatic moves to make a peace process possible; Chen said that Taiwan, which has no diplomatic ties with Israel, "is very supportive of the Arab peace initiatives and supports the attainment of the rights of the Palestinian people."

Chen said the latest political changes in his own country as a boost for its international image. Taiwan recently held the first elections the country since martial law was lifted two years ago. Chen called the elections free and democratic and said they paved a way towards greater development for the country.

## Princess Basma inaugurates social development centre

TAFILEH (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Sunday inaugurated an integrated social development centre here and announced that programmes have been prepared to provide local women with skills and training designed to boost their role in socio-economic development.

The new centre is in line with the Queen Alia Social Welfare Fund (QAF) and its strategy which aims to promote economic and social life in the urban and rural regions of Jordan. Princess Basma noted in a speech at the inauguration ceremony.



Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Sunday inspects the kindergarten operated by the newly inaugurated social development centre in Tafleeh (Petra photo)

The new centre will involve active participation of local women in various activities, especially in child care, local and traditional handicrafts and rural development, the Princess added.

Princess Basma, who is the chairperson of QAF's board of trustees, inspected the centre and was briefed on the various sections which include a nursery, a

kindergarten, a vocational training centre for women, children's club and library and a unit for agricultural and rural development programmes.

Princess Basma also inspected a bazaar held at the centre, displaying various handicrafts, embroideries, knitwear and artificial flowers.

Towards the end of the ceremony she received the Tafleeh Governorate's shield from Governor Khalaf Mahameh.

## Writers thank prime minister for reactivating association

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Mudar Badran Sunday received a cable of thanks from the administrative committee of the Jordanian Writers Association (JWA) for his decision to rescind the military governor's order, dissolving the association.

In its cable the committee, voiced satisfaction with and appreciation to Badran's decision, which the committee de-

scribed as commensurate with the current drive towards democracy and general freedom.

JWA is to open its temporary headquarters in Shmeisani Monday in the presence of the association's board and general assembly members.

Last Friday the government announced a reversal of a 1987 decision that banned the association.

The dissolution of JWA in 1987 involved unpublished charges that the association, which had a membership of about 300, served as a forum for political activities.

The government of Zaid Al Rifai established a Jordanian Writers Federation to replace the association which was dissolved by the government of Mudar Badran last Friday.

## Fuheid praises police athletes

AMMAN (Petra) — The police athletics team who took part in an international marathon championship held in Spain in the past week received Sunday by Public Security Department (PSD) Director General Fadi Ali Fuheid who praised the team's efforts and voiced Jordan's pride in their achievements.

The team, comprising three athletes, did well in the championships, and Ahmad Hamsari won the cup in the face of heavy competition from participants representing 25 nations including six Arab countries.

Fuheid conveyed to the team His Majesty King Hussein's greetings and pledged the PSD's continued support for the sports and athletic endeavours carried out by police teams in Jordan.

The meeting was attended by senior PSD officers.

The meeting came on the eve of the PSD's celebrations of the Arab Police Day which will be organised in Jordan Monday

under the patronage of the PSD director, and attended by former PSD directors and senior officers.

Fuheid and at least one of the retired officers will deliver speeches on the occasion and the PSD director will present awards and medals to a number of veteran officers in recognition of their services.

At the same time, the PSD has organised a general exhibition displaying various equipment used in police work.

Fuheid Sunday received the Yugoslav and Tunisian ambassadors in two separate meetings during which they discussed scopes of bilateral cooperation in the field of security.

## Ministry discusses annual pilgrimage

AMMAN (Petra) — A general meeting was held Sunday by the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs to discuss the question of organising the annual pilgrimage to Mecca and holy places in Saudi Arabia.

The meeting, which was attended by the Ministry's Secretary General Ahmad Hilayel and senior officials from the ministries of Interior and Transport as well as the Public Security Department, discussed the number of vehicles to be used for transporting the pilgrims, transportation fares and the question of stationing police units at border posts to ensure safe travel.

Also discussed was the question of conducting mechanical

tests on vehicles transporting the pilgrims in Ma'an which lies along the route to Saudi Arabia.

The Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs organises the annual pilgrimage performed by Jordanian Muslims and those coming from occupied Arab territories.

Arrangements include transportation to and from the holy places and accommodation.

The ministry also makes special arrangements for the accommodation of Turkish and Syrian pilgrims upon crossing into Jordanian territory and has set up a pilgrims camp at South Shmeisani in the Jordan Valley for the convenience of pilgrims from the occupied Arab lands.

### NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

**13 HELD FOR YARMOUK CLASHES:** Irbid Governor Jawdat Al Shoul Sunday said that 13 suspects have been arrested for involvement in the regrettable incident which took place at Yarmouk University last Wednesday. Shoul pointed out that a legal security investigation panel is currently preparing a report on the reasons behind this incident to enable the government to address the causes and to avoid the recurrence of such an incident "which harms the fabric of our national unity." (Petra)

**EDUCATIONAL ACCORD WITH ARAB STATES:** Minister of Education and Higher Education Mohammad Hamdan said Sunday that Jordan's cultural and educational agreements with other Arab countries, drawn up under the previous administration, will remain valid and measures will be taken to strengthen Jordan's educational and cultural ties with the Arab World. Hamdan was speaking at a meeting with cultural attaches at Arab embassies in Amman to whom he also explained Jordan's new educational plan which is to be implemented over the coming ten years in accordance with the resolutions of the first national education conference of 1987. The minister also gave details about the changes in curricula and programmes in Jordanian schools, designed to encourage creativity among the students. (Petra)

**ACC MINISTERS OF LABOUR TO MEET:** Ministers of Labour and Social Security in the four Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) member states meet in Amman Wednesday to review the achievements made since the last two meetings. The ministers will also discuss the working papers prepared by the technical committee, in preparation for signing the minutes of the meeting. (Petra)

**CBJ, IDB SIGN AGREEMENT:** The Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) Governor Mohammad Sa'id Al Nabulsi and president of the Jordan-based Islamic Development Bank Ahmad Mohammad Ali Sunday signed an agreement, under which the IDB will finance Jordan's purchases of crude oil from an IDB member-state. The purchases amount to \$15 million. (Petra)

**THE INTIFADA DISH:** The Federation of Jordanian Women Sunday hosted a luncheon, called "the intifada dish" in support for the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories. The lunch, organised by the Young Muslim Women's Association and the Rural Development Society, in cooperation with other women organisations to mark the second anniversary of the Palestinian uprising. (Petra)

## WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

### EXHIBITIONS

- An exhibition of paintings and etchings inspired by Arabic Islamic art at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation.
- An art exhibition by artists from Jordan and other Arab countries at Al Wasiti Gallery, Plaza Hotel.
- A photography exhibition on French poet de Prevert at the French Cultural Centre.
- The youths art exhibition at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
- Contemporary Islamic fine arts exhibition by Aboon Nabla at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- An exhibition entitled "The Blue Rider" at the Yarmouk University.

### THEATRE

- A play entitled Christmas Carols at the Royal Cultural Centre — 7:00 p.m.
- A play entitled House Guest at Amman Plaza Hotel — 9:30 p.m.

### FILM

- A French film entitled "Les Enfants du Paradis" at the French Cultural Centre — 8:00 p.m.

### LECTURE CANCELLED

- Tonight's lecture by Dr. Robert Schick on archaeology at ACOR at 7 p.m. is cancelled.

## Students pay 35% of University of Jordan's annual budget

AMMAN (J.T.) — Seventeen thousand three hundred and forty nine post-graduate and undergraduate students are currently enrolled at the University of Jordan, up from 15,500 in the past academic year, but the increase in number did very little to cover the ever increasing cost of education and training, according to the University President Mahmoud Al Samra.

The University of Jordan this year opened its doors for a greater number of students in view of the fact that the majority of them cannot pay for their education abroad, Samra noted in a statement to Sawt Al Shaab Arabic daily.

He said the total number of students pay only 35 per cent of the university's overall annual budget which stands at JD, 17 million.

Samra pointed out that among the present students, 954 are

Jordanians living abroad, 521 from occupied Palestine, 495 non-Jordanian Arabs, 121 non-Arab students and 131 students on special courses.

Samra said that the cost of providing post graduate courses is five times the total cost of training the undergraduates in various specialisations. He said that the University of Jordan currently awards post graduate degrees in biology, chemistry, physics Arabic language and history.

But the president complained of the lack of funds for financing post graduate scientific research and higher research programmes

at the university.

He said that in view of the present economic situation in the Kingdom, the country cannot allocate even one per cent of its fiscal budget for scientific research due to lack of funds, and therefore, scientific research is far from being satisfactory.

Samra said that despite these setbacks, the university research staff maintain a steady level of research work and regularly publish their findings in a specialised gazette which is distributed to various organisations and universities in Jordan and abroad.

**GIFT TO COMOROS ISLANDS:** The Comoros Islands Ambassador to Egypt Abdullah Ibrahim Sunday arrived in Amman from Cairo. He is to take delivery of a consignment of medicines for his country as a gift from Jordan. (Petra)

**NMI TO HOLD BAZAAR:** The National Medical Institution (NMI) will Tuesday hold its annual charity bazaar at the Farah Royal Rehabilitation Centre. On display for three days are samples of embroideries, knit-wear, ceramics and artificial flowers.

### Thinking of Christmas?

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December 18th - 20th  
Tickets J.D. 15 p.p. plus 10% Gov. Tax.

Dinner Starts at 8.30 p.m.  
Play starts at 9.30 p.m.

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## Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation, established 1975.

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The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.  
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the  
Jordan Times Advertising Department.

## Splendid coordination

THE Parliament was of course right in calling for a thorough investigation of last week student clashes at Yarmouk University. And Prime Minister Mudar Badran was also right in cooperating with the legislature to nip in the bud any sign of sectionalism in the country. This splendid coordination and cooperation between the two branches of the state is the finest hour yet in the history of parliamentary life in the Kingdom.

The symbolism of sectionalism in the country in fact occurred many times in the past including at various Jordanian campuses. Hitherto the policy has been to hush up the incidents and sweep them under the carpet. By such an approach the "problem" kept festering only to surface again and again with far reaching implications. The magnificent intervention by the Parliament this time shows that the days are gone when such serious threats to national unity and harmony could be swept under the carpet and the culprits, the real culprits, remain outside the rule of the law. As Prime Minister Badran has boldly and courageously, told the Parliament and the country Saturday, the strength of the country stems first and foremost from its internal cohesion and solidarity and any side that tampers with such unity and harmony will be dealt with in the severest way possible.

The first order of business therefore is to investigate the matter openly and then allow the country to debate the issue once and for all and last to bring to justice all those who take the law into their hands. It must be borne in mind that any person or group of persons who threaten the national unity of the country are simply playing with fire and executing the dreams and designs of the enemies of the Kingdom on top of which is of course Israel. Nothing pleases Israel more than to see Jordan, the oasis of peace, tranquility and moderation in the Middle East, torn apart by factionalism or sectionalism; and all those hands that promote such a division are simply playing into the hands of Israel and its agents. Accordingly, all those who precipitated in the Yarmouk student clashes must be identified, tried and severely punished. Otherwise the problem will keep on festering in the minds and hearts of some citizens and the country will end up paying the price of their ignominious deeds and short-sightedness.

Above all, the sober and responsible manner with which the Parliament has deliberated the issue of Yarmouk University vindicates the urgent call for fortifying parliamentary life in the country. The best proof of this is the fact that in the past such incidents were never given public airing. This time around, thank God, the problem is thoroughly debated, investigated and dealt with.

## JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i Sunday echoes King Hussein's expression of deep pride in Royal Jordanian as a leading national institution which has helped the country's tourism and carried the Kingdom's name all over the planet. The paper paid tribute to King Hussein for sharing with Royal Jordanian staff their celebration of the national airline's 26th anniversary and his praise of the staff's endeavours and creative work in service of the nation. The King's continued encouragement of national institutions to increase their efforts and do more for Jordan, will no doubt help boost the staff's morale and increase their encouragement and enthusiastic work, the paper noted. It said that the King's honouring of the members of the RJ staff displays the leader's concern and deep interest in the national institutions and their creative work and is considered a very important gesture that would prompt further successes. The paper congratulated the RJ staff on the anniversary, and expressed hope that the event would give incentive for further development and progress.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily praises the stand of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) for expressing its total denunciation of an attack by unidentified elements on Syrian military positions in southern Lebanon. Mahmoud Rihawi says that the PLO's readiness to take part in investigation into the event reflects the organisation's awareness of the seriousness of the situation in Lebanon and its willingness to help defuse tension. Southern Lebanon, which has been exposed to various forms of conflicts should not be left to the whims of irresponsible elements that open the way for Israel's tampering of security and invites further Israeli aggression, the writer notes. He says that the Palestinians and the Syrians ought now to undertake very constructive and positive steps in dealing with the situation and so prevent any hostile elements from exploiting the regrettable incident. The relaxed political atmosphere which now prevails in the world should encompass the Arab region, and pave the way for a reconciliation between Syria and other Arab states and the PLO, since unity of ranks is the best and strongest weapon with which the Arabs can confront their common enemies, the writer concludes.

Al Dussar daily commented on the student clashes at Yarmouk University in the light of the Parliament debate over the issue on Saturday. The paper praised the stand of Prime Minister Mudar Badran and Parliament members who called for strict penalties to be imposed on the perpetrators and those behind the disturbances. It said that such attitude on the part of the legislative and executive authorities in Jordan is bound to put an end to any tampering with the national security and national unity in Jordan. By nipping the conspiracy against the nation in the bud, the paper said, the door will be closed for those elements that mean to cause harm to this country and its national unity.

## Weekly Political Pulse

# Will pluralism come to Moscow?

By Waleed Sadi

IN the light of the loss of the monopoly status that the Communist parties had enjoyed in Eastern Europe till the wind of change swept through it in the course of the last few months, one wonders why or for how long would Moscow reject pluralism within its political structure. That the Soviet Union has tolerated if not encouraged the introduction of multi-party political systems in so many of its allied countries within the Warsaw Pact is clear enough. The Kremlin could have put an end to the trend of abolishing the monopoly status of the Communist parties within its own backyard right from the start and that could have nipped the new phenomenon in the bud. Instead the Soviet authorities chose to turn a blind eye to the political events in Eastern Europe as they unfolded before their very eyes. Why then is Moscow denying itself what it is accepting for its closest allies?

Part of the answer could lie in the proposition that Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev views the emergence of multi-party systems in so many of the East European countries as an experiment that needs to be guarded, pursued and analysed before he would consider duplicating it within his own country. There is no doubt that by at least tolerating the wide-spread political reforms in the East European countries, the Soviet leadership is signalling its sympathy and approval of these reformations. Once the experi-

ments in Eastern Europe have gone their course, consolidated their gains and fortified their existence, Moscow will follow suit as natural and logical as night follows day.

Over and above the intrinsic benefits of pluralism in Eastern Europe, it must have dawned on the Soviet Union that the willingness of the West to completely open up to the East Europeans and extend to them the kind of cooperation and assistance they ask for are hinged on the willingness of Moscow to extend its perestroika all the way to reach the outer fringes or at least market economy and multi-party system. President George Bush and his aids have said so in so many words when they repeatedly called on the Soviet President to adopt contemporary economic policies that are in tune with international norms on trade and commerce. It goes without saying that the ultimate salvation of the archaic Soviet economy lies in the adoption of a market-oriented economy and the cessation of the centralised economic practices that have proved their futility over and over again. With the Soviet economy clearly in shambles and Soviet citizens complaints and anger at the state of their country's economy increasing, there is no way that Moscow can turn except to proven successful economic practices that can be found

only in market-oriented economy. Once Moscow turns to market economy and accepts more dosages of free enterprise, the second logical follow-up development would be the ending of the monopoly that the Communist Party there still enjoys. One can see these developments coming as the grumbling within the Soviet Congress of deputies about the situation in the country increase.

Coming to think of it, it must be exasperating for Moscow to be seen left way behind the other Eastern European countries in the context of reformation instead of being a model for them when perestroika and glasnost were first introduced to the Soviet Union four years ago. By failing to be a show place for the rest of its allies, Moscow has suffered dearly. And obviously the most effective way to rectify the damage, that has already been done to its prestige and image, is to accelerate its own reformation in order to regain its position and status as a country on top of things instead of being at the bottom of events. That is an added reason why Moscow will have to shift gear very soon and accelerate the motion of reform that it has started on its own more than four years ago, and become once again the locomotive that is pulling the rest of the East European countries instead of remaining merely one of the wagons that are being pulled by countries such as Hungary, Poland and East Germany.

## Two Germanys take big strides towards close ties

By Nesha Starcevic  
The Associated Press

WEST BERLIN — While Europe faces the prospect of German reunification in the future, the two states are expanding ties so quickly that some observers believe the process already is taking place.

The United States and the Soviet Union insist they must have a say in any moves to merge the two Germanys, but the daily rush of events may outrun their ability to control the process.

Not a day has passed in recent weeks without prominent Germans visiting each other across the formerly closed frontier or another series of agreements being signed.

The East Berlin government insists it will stop short of a formal union and says it wants to preserve the Socialist system. The West German government's position is that the East German people must be allowed to decide on reunification after free elections are held.

Intra-German cooperation ranges from large industrial projects to plans for single subway tickets for West Berlin and East Berlin, and completion of autobahn links severed in the postwar occupation of Germany.

For many countries, though, the wounds of Nazi leader Adolf Hitler's war are even now still too fresh to make the prospect of a united Germany a pleasing one.

The country would have 80 million people in the heart of Europe and economic power that would dwarf its neighbours. Some have voiced fears about an emerging "fourth reich."

"Our neighbours are worried and their fears are justified," says noted West German political scientist Joachim Perels. "They are

worried that things are moving too fast."

Josef Janning, an expert on East-West relations at the University of Mainz, agrees that West Germany must consult with other countries on its policy towards East Germany to allay these concerns.

Now that the Germans are discovering their own national policy, there are justifications for fears. Bonn should not make any unilateral moves without consultations," Janning said.

"But some sort of German unity cannot be prevented, not even the Germans can prevent it," he said in an interview.

West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl angered some other countries within the NATO alliance by proposing a 10-point plan for eventual German reunification without consulting Bonn's allies.

European leaders have passed resolutions that hardly hide their fears of a mighty Germany dominating the continent. U.S. Secretary of State James Baker has urged a go-slow approach to German reunification.

The Soviets, who have nearly 400,000 troops in East Germany, have issued stern warnings against Western interference in East German developments and have stated they oppose German reunification.

The leaders of the 12 nations in the European Economic Community have agreed that reunification must come through self-determination of the people in the two Germanys and in consultation with other European countries.

The European Parliament has urged West Germany to state "quickly and unambiguously" that, in the event of reunification, it would not try to incorporate

former eastern territories that were lost in the war and now belong to Poland and the Soviet Union.

In East Germany, meanwhile, demonstrations have become more nationalistic.

"Germany united fatherland," thousands of people have shouted at mass rallies held on the past four Mondays in Leipzig, the hotbed of the opposition movement that unleashed the recent democratic changes in what once used to be a rigid Communist country. Calls for quick reunification have been made at other rallies in the country.

At the last Leipzig rally, angry exchanges broke out between supporters and opponents of reunification. The opposition movement has said it fears a split in its ranks over the issue.

Free elections in East Germany have been set for May 6, 1990, and at least two opposition groups have spoken in favour of reunification.

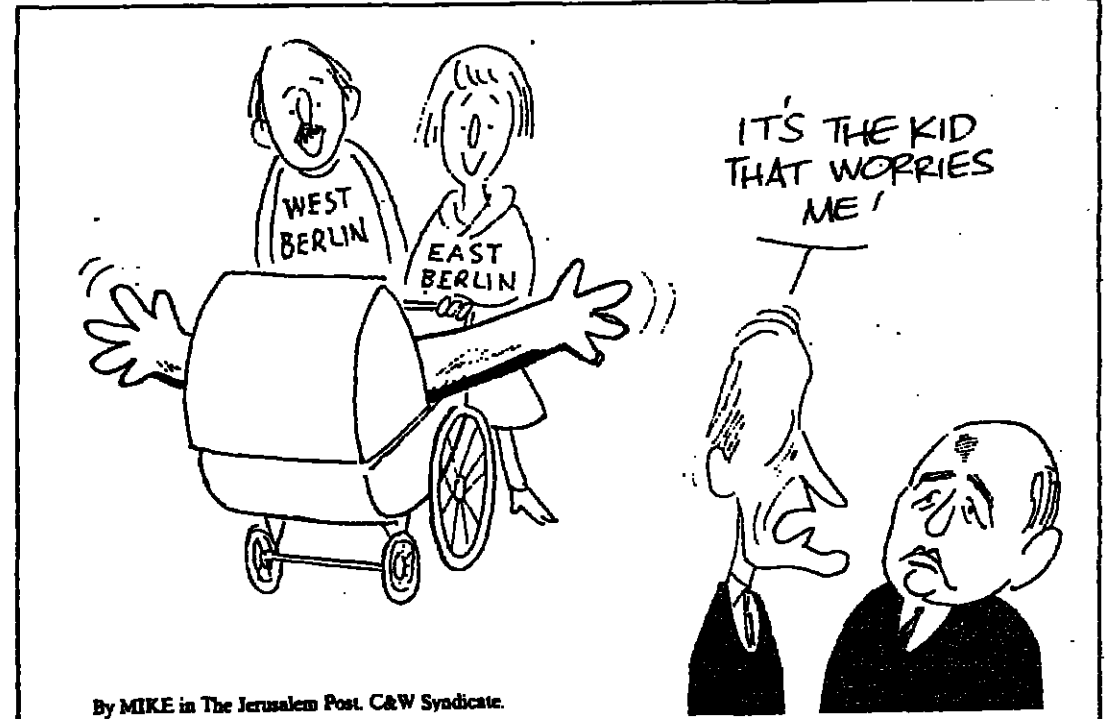
While East Germany's Communist-dominated government officially opposes reunification, it has worked actively to expand ties with Bonn at all levels.

When hopes began opening in the Berlin Wall, East Berlin and West Berlin police quickly established contact to deal with traffic problems and other mundane matters.

What began with such small steps has turned into giant strides one month later. Both sides seem to have dusted off contingency plans that have sat in bottom desk drawers for decades.

"What belongs together will grow together," former West German Chancellor Willy Brandt said, after the opening of the Berlin Wall, in a now often-quoted expression.

Kohl plans to travel to East



By MIKE in The Jerusalem Post. C&W Syndicate.

Germany on Tuesday, a trip that will undoubtedly add impetus to trade ties between the two states.

Volkswagen, West Germany's biggest auto maker, has signed an agreement to cooperate in developing a new generation of East German Trabant cars. Dresdner Bank, the second-largest bank in West Germany, is considering opening branches in East Germany.

West German Economics Minister Helmut Haussmann returned Friday from talks in East Berlin that resulted in an agreement to set up a joint economic commission to expand cooperation.

Bonn has promised 1 billion marks (\$580 million) for a project to clean up East Germany's badly

polluted environment.

Lufthansa and Interflug, the two flag carriers, are adding new flights between the two countries nearly every week.

In a once unthinkable move, Lufthansa joined with Interflug in placing a full-page advertisement last week in Neues Deutschland, the Communist party newspaper.

A fast rail link between Berlin, located 160 kilometres inside East Germany, and Hannover in West Germany is under consideration. A daily bus connection between Rostock in East Germany and Kiel in West Germany started this week.

Starting Jan. 1, West Germans will no longer need visas to visit East Germany.

Perels, the political scientist, urged the United States and other Western governments to support the process of democratic reforms in East Germany, no matter what the future of reunification may be.

"What Baker did was the right thing," Perels said, referring to the secretary of state's visit to East Berlin last Tuesday.

Baker promised U.S. support for the government of Communist Premier Hans Modrow if the country goes ahead with free elections and other reforms.

"This gave Modrow new legitimacy," Perels said. "The West must support the reforms, so that the democratic transformation moves peacefully and in a stable way."

## In a decade of change, Gorbachev was the catalyst

By Robert Evans  
Reuters

MOSCOW — "To change society," Mikhail Gorbachev told a critical audience of Soviet students as 1989 drew to a close, "we have to change ourselves."

In a decade that began with the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and a revived cold war that ended with the opening of the Berlin Wall, Gorbachev was the major catalyst.

In less than five years as Moscow number one, his impact on the international stage had grown from Washington to Peking, hailing him with genuine conviction as "Gorby the peacemaker."

While asserting total commitment to the Communist ideal, he joined his own vast country out of the Stalinist thrall and set it on the road to something like social democracy.

His renunciation of any Kremlin right to dictate its will beyond Soviet borders helped bring, in the last months of the 1980s, disintegration of the "old regime" in Eastern Europe.

He travelled to China in May 1989 to put a formal end to the "great schism" that had once brought the two Communist superpowers to the brink of all-out conflict.

His rejection of the "class war" view of inter-state relations cleared the way for a stable concord with the United States ending 45 years of bitter great-rivalry.

Meeting in Malta in December, Gorbachev and U.S. President George Bush agreed the cold war could be assigned to history and predicted a new era of East-West cooperation.

On his way to the summit, the leader of the party that long proclaimed religion the opium of the people also made his peace with the Pope, and the Catholic church, in Rome.

Yet at home his uncertain popularity looked increasingly shaky as his "perestroika" or restructuring of society seemed incapable of satisfying basic consumer demands.

And the former farm boy from southern Russia remained for many of his fellow-countrymen what a commentator in the Moscow press he himself unsmilingly called "the Gorbachev enigma."

Where did his reforming urge come from? Was it just a response to recognition that the Soviet Union had stagnated while the outside world surged into a new technological age?

Was he still, as he himself once put it, a "prodont of our common past" aiming above all to keep the Communist Party in power within a framework of apparent democracy?

When Gorbachev rocketed into the Communist Party's ruling politburo from provincial obscurity under Leonid Brezhnev at the end of the 1970s there was no sign of what was to come.

"He had three decades inside the party apparatus, and that meant 18 hours a day with people of a narrow, limited vision," says writer and political analyst Anatoly Stryanov.

"The rest of us had time to read books and learn about the real world. He is conscientious, he was always a hard worker, so he can hardly have had time to look up at the stars."

Yet in late 1984, just a few months before he was chosen Kremlin chief at the age of 54, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher spotted him in a now famous phrase as "a Soviet leader I can do business with."

Visiting Britain at the head of an official delegation, he showed genuine interest in what he saw while his speech was free of the usual wooden incantations of Communist ideologues.

Yevgeny Novikov, a rare Gorbachev-age defector to the West

and former senior official of the party's powerhouse central committee, says Gorbachev's wife Raisa provides part of the answer.

Novikov, in an interview with the U.S.-financed Radio Liberty, said Mrs. Gorbachev as a Moscow university lecturer in the early 1980s mixed with a school of "new thinkers" there.

Many of these intellectuals, most still convinced Marxists despite their disgust with Brezhnev's "real Socialism," were later drawn into the new leader's entourage, Novikov said.

Dev Murarka, an Indian journalist writing on the Soviet scene from Moscow for 25 years and author of one of the first Gorbachev biographies to appear in the West, agrees.

"I am absolutely sure that Raisa has been a tremendous influence on him, and for the good," Murarka says.

Gorbachev himself admits he had little concept of the depths to which the Soviet Union had sunk economically and in social services where it long boasted it led the world.

"The outward appearance of well-being was achieved at the cost of consuming the country's natural wealth to the detriment of future generations," he declared in November.

And in one of the frank admissions of Soviet failure that increasingly marked the style of his rule, he told his student audience the West offered living standards beyond the dreams of ordinary Soviet people.

"We stayed in past age, while the developed countries of the West moved into the new era of high technology," he said.

Yet the realisation clearly came to him only slowly. "At first it seemed to us all we needed to do was improve something here and make something else more perfect there."

"Today we have come to the

firm conclusion that we must reform everything fundamentally and ensure deep-going changes in the very basis of our society," he said.

The radicals, to whom he gave political voice through his destruction of the old tame parliament and creation of a new one with teeth, at first revered him.

But as the stunned conservatives and party apparatchiki regrouped to present a serious force, his centrist position alarmed his supporters on the Soviet left.

"He tacks back and forth and doesn't seem to want to take any real decisions — that's why we've got nowhere with the economy," says poet and novelist Vladimir Korolov.

"We no longer see the decisiveness and sense of purpose that he had in the beginning. The people around him seem to be stopping him develop," says Yuri Sorochik, a young radical deputy to the new parliament and veteran of the Afghan war.

But the hard-liners still strong in the party saw another danger in the dilution of old-style Communist dogma and in the reduction of their own power under his reforms.

On his return from Malta in December, they launched a bitter attack on "perestroika" at home and abroad at a key Kremlin meeting, calling for a return to "the true path."

Gorbachev, the supreme political tactician, countered with an offer to step down. The conservatives, with no real policies or leader of their own to offer, retreated.

Did Gorbachev foresee that what he began in the Soviet Union would blast through Eastern Europe with such force that even cautious foreign observers could conclude with total conviction that they were seeing the end of Communism?

"No," says Sorochik. "I don't

think he even foresaw fully what he was unleashing at home."

"Yes," says Murarka. "I believe that from the beginning he knew that he had to get rid of the East European burden, both politically and economically."

Whatever Gorbachev's intentions, his clear encouragement of change in the erstwhile satellite states pushed the old continent close to realising his own ideal of "a common European home."

Having sought to destroy the "enemy image" of the West driven deep into the thinking of generations of Soviet people by implacable Kremlin ideologues, he saw the West's image of a "Soviet threat" melting fast.

Through personal charm he wooed even then U.S. President

Ronald Reagan from the view that Moscow was the "evil empire," and saw the old crusader against Communism proclaim his conversion in the heart of the Kremlin itself at their 1988 summit.

Showing flexibility and a readiness to compromise — itself a dirty word in the late Soviet lexicon — he helped bring the superpowers close to recasting at least half of their sharpest swords into ploughshares.

"Whatever his mistakes, and although so much remains to be done, we have to recognise that he has totally changed this country and the world," says Sorochik.

## Beware of Israeli aggression

THE successful launching of the Iraqi space rocket has opened a new revolutionary era in the Middle East. Since the Arabs, for the first time, are on the threshold of a balance of power. "Israel has always enjoyed a military superiority with the latest American technology and advanced weapons in its armed forces. Israel also managed the develop and test its first nuclear bomb 70 years ago with the blessing of Lyndon Johnson and its first H bomb with the cooperation of South Africa and the blessing of President Carter 10 years ago. It seems that the U.S. is not happy these days because an Arab country has joined the space club and may perhaps join the nuclear club in the near future. I am sure that the U.S. strategic agent Israel is preparing a secret plan to destroy the Iraqi space project so as to prevent the Arabs from having any kind of deterrent or methods of retaliation.

In 1981 Israel did not hesitate to send its American-made planes to destroy the Iraqi nuclear reactor with help from American space technology.

The U.S. and Israel are quite aware of this new space era in the Middle East and the possibility of Arab deterrent in conventional or unconventional weapons because this means that no body can force us to accept the Zionist peace doctrine as framed by Yitzhak Shamir or any body else.

It will be a timely warning to the Americans and Israelis that 1989 or 1990 is not 1981 and they will have to pay a very heavy price if they decide to go ahead and seek to destroy the Iraqi rocket project. For all we know it could trigger another Middle East war.

Mohammed S. Jamhour  
Brigadier General (Rtd)





In Xisa minority group, the Moso men are allowed to meet their wives only after night falls. During the day, they stay with their mothers

## An unwritten marriage code

By Xu Yihe

A VOLCANIC lightning coupled with peals of thunder dms two young lovers out of their dreadful dreams. Bewildered and desperate, they dash amidst the wailing wind towards the shimmering sun.

The setting sun and evil wind, both symbolic of bad luck in the unwritten marriage code of the Chinese Wa ethnic group populated in the west of south China's Yunnan province, signify that their love, no matter how deep-rooted it is, will not lead to marriage.

In his effort to defy the evil that just terminated his love, the spotlit young man whirls, tumbles and splits until he tires out, while in the background the light dims as the girl swings her waist-long hair as if cursing the diviner.

The audience found tears well up from their eyes long before the curtain falls.

The 10-act musical presented by the Yunnan Song and Dance Ensemble to mark the Second Chinese Arts Festival that ran from September 25 to October 5 in Beijing dramatises both legends and facts-based kaleidoscopic marriage folklores of 10 minority nationalities of the province.

Yunnan province, where 25 minority groups live, is known as a living museum of folklores, among which varied marriage forms stand out.

One of the legends goes that though the Wa people enjoy freedom of love and marriage today as in the old days, young people in love have to have their fate determined through a diviner and dream interpretation before they get married.

The rising sun, the singing birds or the rippling streams, for example, in the dreams conceived during cohabitation of lovers without physical contact will bring the two separate hearts together.

The 90-minute-long musical, performed by over 40 dancers and singers of 16 minority nationalities of the ensemble, also spells out the evolution of human marriage through the expressions of various forms of matrimony.

It starts with an age-old legend. Centuries ago, a big flood devastated the earth, claiming the lives of all living creatures except a girl and her brother, who escaped the disaster in a gourd and later gave birth to their offspring, thus sowing the seeds of their love in the soil of their land.

On the stage, the silhouetted girl and her brother set in the cut-out gourd dancing with the seas first struggled for life and then as the tide receded they fell

in blind love and felt hungry for sexual existence.

Love may be a sweet experience, but to trace back to the stories behind it and to gracefully visualise it on stage is a bitter one, according to Xu Yan, the playwright.

In a fact-finding tour made in 1987, Xu and his choreographers trekked through 30 ethnic-group-populated towns covering 3,000 kilometers to rub shoulders with what he called religious-minded natives.

In Luchua township, the choreographers were shocked to find that most married locals and young people in love have scarred hand backs. A detailed talk with them revealed that the local customs and religion demand that lovers bite each other's hand till blood gushes out as a vow of fidelity, so that they can mix the blood.

"The more you love your sweet-heart, the deeper your teeth get," said Xu, who is also the chief of the ensemble.

Every bit of details of the local marriage customs the choreographers got would find its proof in the historical records, according to Zhou Peiwu, the chief choreographer.

"We would check with historians and folklore experts to straighten out what we heard," he said.

They heard that in some villages of the Moso branch of the Naxi minority near the Lugu Lake in the southwest of the province, married people still stay with their mothers during the day. Only after night falls do they go to live with their spouses.

They did not believe the story until they had eye-witnesses or proofs from folklore experts.

While some parts of the musical present the sad side of the local marriages, the hilarious atmosphere predominate most of the scenes, according to Zhou.

In some Lisu minority villages, for example, a bride is to be "thrown" to her groom by her relatives. While carrying the bride, the groom has to walk among the bottles scattered on the ground without knocking them down. Otherwise, he is to be punished.

The groom with the bride in his arms, cautiously picking his way with dancing steps on the bottle-dotted stage and surrounded by a group of naughty girls is really giving the audience a good laugh, commented Fu Zhaoxian, a dancing critic with the China Dance Research Institute.

More exciting than watching the groom dancing with bride in the arm is the scene of beating up the grooms as practiced by Hani minority.

As women-dominated society is being replaced by patriarchal society in Hani ethnic group,

women who have lost their patriarchal power would gather to beat up anyone who marries one of their relatives or fellow villagers as a way to utter their grievances.

Though the beating-up has lost its original revengeful intention, the practice remains.

"It represents more an amusement than a punishment," Xu said. In their effort to best demonstrate the different marriage customs of the selected 10 ethnic groups which are more socially accepted, the choreographers have fused singing, religious music, group dances, pas de deux and solos into a brilliant spectacle with both traditional and modern colors, according to Feng Shuangbei, a professor with the dance institute.

The group dances are typical of local flavors, he said, citing that the girls and boys in colorful native costumes dance to the folk music in a festival atmosphere.

The pas de deux, on the other hand, he said, gives a clear evidence that the choreographers used ballet techniques when the dancers jump as light as feathers and twist in intimate moves, which conjure up in the audience subtle images of loving prattles and romances.

Xu led his ensemble to the villages where ethnic groups live to pool sources of folk dances. They rehearsed on the spot and presented them to the locals before bringing them on the triumphant tour to Beijing late last September.

## Humanisation of skin diseases

Dr. Oumeish Youssef Oumeish is the President of The Jordanian Dermatological & Venereological Society.

By Dr. Oumeish Y. Oumeish

THERE ARE at least three billion people in 127 developing countries who are deprived of basic care for their skin diseases. Skin diseases cause major functional disability and disfigurement. If they are left untreated, the victim is prevented from reaching his or her potential and instead becomes a severe emotional and economic burden on both the family and the community.

In many rural communities around the world, more than 80 per cent of the children are afflicted with skin infections. Skin diseases are a major public health problem in all developing countries and among the five commonest causes of morbidity and loss of manpower in rural areas. Also it is said to know that the majority of the world population has no access to essential dermatologic drugs, and only about 35 African countries have dermatologists.

There is, however, an optimistic message and that is: With proper diagnosis and appropriate management, the consequences

of skin diseases can be effectively addressed. In fact, in the rural populations of developing countries, as much as 60 to 80 per cent of skin diseases are preventable, curable, or controllable.

Promotion of medical services, training of doctors and paramedical staff, and education of people about these diseases will definitely improve the dermatologic health in developing countries. Also, by emphasising the delivery of primary dermatologic care to these regions of the world of greatest need, will assist in prevention, cure and rehabilitation.

The creation of regional dermatological research and training centres like a pan-Arab Centre, is a priority to respond to the needs of developing countries in this field of health care. Through these centres, a broad spectrum of education, prevention, and care can be conducted in an efficient cost-effective, and humanitarian manner. Both the public and health care personnel at all levels of need will be trained, patient services will be promoted, and research will be carried out to establish models

for future centres world-wide.

It is important to develop a cadre of experienced dermatovenerologists willing to serve on a short or long term basis on visiting teachers, lecturers, advisors, or practitioners. Collaborative programmes between institutions from developed and developing countries of the world should also be encouraged. In addition we should assist in the development of model lists of essential dermatologic therapeutic agents for all health care levels. It is also important to strengthen research that is oriented to the dermatologic priority needs in developing countries.

Dermatological diseases are always faced with ignorance and prejudice in developing countries, and almost related to "dirt" and "shame", and so they are out of other diseases, are least known, most misunderstood and underestimated, and they continue to cause a diagnostic and therapeutic problem in the Third World.

The science of skin diseases has changed considerably over the last several decades. With the sudden and extensive development of medicine that began

around World War II, dermatology was one of the medical specialties that took the greatest advantage of the huge increase in knowledge in all fields, as a consequence several subspecialties have emerged. New techniques have been introduced to study congenital skin diseases in vivo i.e. to take foetal skin sample from the foetus inside the uterus in the early stage of pregnancy and make the diagnosis.

Humanisation and education about the skin diseases are essential to understand these diseases and help millions of patients all around the world.

In Jordan there are almost 120 specialists in the field of dermatology and venereology i.e. sexually transmitted diseases, with an overall percentage of one specialist to every 25,000 Population, and the ideal ratio is one to 10,000.

The Jordanian Dermatological and Venereological Society was established in affiliation with the Jordan Medical Association with the aim of organising the specialty of dermatology and venereology, to promote and update this science, to keep its standard and ethics, and to educate both general practitioners and patients.

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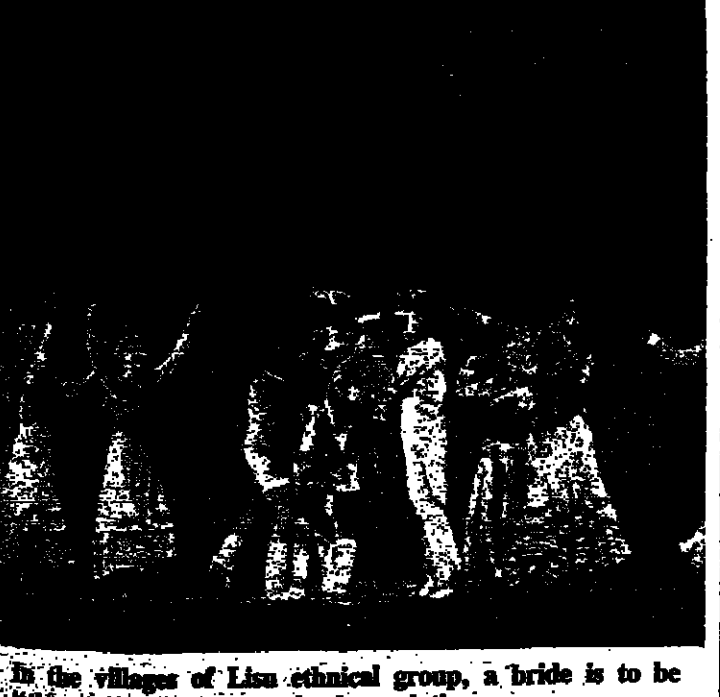
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In the villages of Lisu ethnic group, a bride is to be "thrown" to her groom by her relatives



## Ryzhkov asks parliament to support economic plan

MOSCOW (R) — Soviet Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov appealed to parliament Saturday to back his plan for economic revival despite its shortcomings.

"We understand that the government programme has drawbacks," he told the Congress of People's Deputies, winding up a four-day debate. "But as far as possible it takes into consideration our real potential, the extent of our development and sets targets for the future."

The government plan, spelled out by Ryzhkov Wednesday, sets a course for the country's gradual transformation from a planned to a market economy, but stops well short of the radical changes recommended by the country's leading economists.

During the debate, the programme was criticised from left and right. Some deputies accused the government of attempting to revive capitalism while others said it amounted to a set of half-measures which could not succeed.

Ryzhkov defended his plan, saying that neither conservative nor ultra-radical measures would provide solutions and rejecting the application of "shock therapy," which he said could cost the country dear.

"We can neither follow the road of small-scale, partial and slow measures to improve the economic mechanism, nor plunge into the abyss of market chaos without creating the necessary conditions and effective controls," he said.

The prime minister attacked the 400-strong inter-regional group of radical reformist deputies, which he said had expressed its opposition to the government programme.

"A failure to support the plan would amount to a refusal to take any action at all," he said.

Earlier, Ryzhkov and his programme had come under attack from the influential deputy Georgy Arbatov, head of the Academy of Sciences' United States and Canada Institute and a foreign policy adviser to President Mikhail Gorbachev.

Arbatov said the proposed measures failed to take steps towards dismantling the military-industrial complex, which he said was costing the country far more than it could afford.

He also criticised Ryzhkov for calling his plan a government programme, rather than taking personal responsibility.

"The time has passed for hiding behind the Politburo, the Central Committee, the Supreme Soviet or the Congress of People's Deputies. People should know who their heroes and their villains are," Arbatov declared to applause from the hall.

Boris Yeltsin told the Congress of People's Deputies that the government had caved in to the wishes of conservatives.

"Conservative forces wishing to prevent economic reform from turning into radical transformations have joined ranks and achieved this end," he said.

The Soviet economic crisis was due to the "lack of determination, compromises, manoeuvring between the interests of the apparatus and society," he added.

He proposed that the government abolish a number of ministries, revamp its state planning committee, reform the monetary system, create labour and financial markets and open the country to foreign investment.

Ryzhkov's plan proposes to introduce price reform starting in 1991, land leasing in agriculture and a new taxation system. It will also boost food and consumer goods production.

It does not, however, abolish the government's central planning role, and this has disappointed many reformists.

Yeltsin urged congress to reject the plan, but other radicals poured cold water on his fiery speech.

Deputy Prime Minister Leonid Abalkin denounced Yeltsin at a news conference, saying his economic proposals were "utterly unacceptable and dangerous."

Abalkin, a radical economist whose ideas partly underpin the Ryzhkov plan, suggested that Yeltsin did not have a good understanding of economics, saying he had combined "incompatible economic ideas."

He said the government had rejected "cavalry charge" methods to rescue the economy.

"This government programme is the only way to stabilise the economy and prepare it for the introduction of market levers," Abalkin said.



Arab experts listen to Dr. Naser Sayegh (centre in white suite), director-general of AOAS addressing the opening session (Petra photo)

## AOAS focuses on administration role in boosting Arab commerce

AMMAN (Petra) — Economic experts from Arab countries gathered Sunday at the Amman-based Arab Organisation of Administrative Sciences (AOAS) to discuss inter-Arab trade, management and marketing Arab exports as well as trade agreements and their role in promoting such exports.

According to Dr. Hisham Gharaibeh, director of the AOAS's consultation department, the four-day meeting, which is attended by 18 Arab

countries, will look into the role of the Arab Monetary Fund in providing funds to finance trade among Arab states.

AOAS Director-General Naser Al Sayegh emphasised in an address the importance of developing inter-Arab trade which, he said, is bound to lead to economic integration within the Arab World.

The present stage through which the Arab states are passing call for a closer cooperation in trade matters and benefiting from

local resources, Sayegh noted.

The meeting, he said, was organised for the particular reason of focusing light on the role of administration in promoting inter-Arab trade and increasing exports of Arab products to the outside world.

Dr. Abu Bakr Baireh, head of the AOAS's training department, said that the meeting would discuss questions related to markets; and the participants would exchange views and expertise with a view to promoting exports.

## Sierra Leone imposes austerity programme

FREETOWN (AP) — President Joseph Momoh has announced sharp energy price increases and trade liberalisation in a programme designed to win new aid from Western creditors.

Momoh said the austerity programme has "the full backing of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank (and) is designed to halt the decline of our economy and promote its growth," he spoke on national television.

The measures include a doubling of the price of electricity provided by the national utility and a 20 per cent increase in petroleum prices. Prices for both had been among the lowest in West Africa for a non-oil exporting nation.

Taxes on beer and tobacco will be doubled.

Momoh said the measures are important "because the international community has always shown a willingness to assist those countries which show positive steps on their own to set their house in order."

The IMF has suspended backing for Sierra Leone because the country was deemed to have failed to implement effective reform measures.

Momoh also said the government would eliminate the need for export or import licences for all products except gold and diamonds, two of the country's main foreign exchange earners.

Licences for gold and diamonds will be issued to all "qualified partners and individuals on payment of the revised licence fees."

Momoh made no mention of a further devaluation of the Leone, also one of the conditions set by the IMF for a new support programme. The currency is set at 65 to the dollar but the dollar fetches twice that rate on the black market.

Prices for petroleum were doubled last June, and Momoh said he understood the hikes would be hard on the country. He said he would review salaries for government employees as soon as possible to "cushion the impact of the adjustment process."

The president said Sierra Leone had been spending more than it earned for years and austerity measures were unavoidable.

"Today we have started reform, and it is a process which will take several months but at the end of the road, my government is confident it will mean greater prosperity," Momoh said.

## Castro gives food priority

HAVANA (R) — Cuban President Fidel Castro said domestic food production must be Cuba's number one priority, even above sugar output, in the face of economic problems expected to result from political changes in Eastern Europe, the official newspaper Granma has reported.

Granma said Castro told a meeting that Cuba would be reviewing its economic position and preparing the nation for "whatever negative consequences might result from the current international situation."

This was a clear reference to the political changes sweeping the Soviet Union and its East Bloc allies, which since the 1959 revolution have been the main source of trade and aid to Cuba.

Castro has previously said he expects the changes to hit Cuba's sugar-based economy by disrupting supplies of vital goods to the island.

"Today, with the problems that are approaching us, food production is the number one priority, along with sugar cane, which is also a food," Granma quoted Castro as saying.

"Sugar cane is sacred but above that we must guarantee food and vegetables for the people," he added.

Sugar is the traditional main-

stay of the Cuban economy and dominates its agriculture, earning more than 20 per cent of the country's foreign currency income.

Cuba also produces citrus fruit, tobacco, coffee, cocoa and other tropical fruit but imports wheat, maize, dairy products and meat.

Many basic foodstuffs like rice, beans, meat, coffee, butter and even sugar are rationed in Cuba to ensure equal distribution, although the 10 million population is healthy and well fed.

Castro has insisted that Cuba, despite the changes shaking its socialist allies in Eastern Europe, will not abandon Marxism.

The Cuban president drew publicity closer to China last week citing improved diplomatic relations and increased trade.

Castro made the remarks while opening a new Chinese restaurant with visiting Chinese Trade and Economic relations Minister Zheng Tuobin, the Cuban news agency Prensa Latina reported.

The restaurant opening ceremony followed the signing in Havana of a commercial agreement which will boost Cuban-Chinese trade in 1990 to \$500 million, an 11 per cent increase over the current level.

Castro said relations with China were "getting better all the time" and added that Chinese goods, especially industrial products, were greatly appreciated in Cuba.

Zheng repeated his government's invitation for Castro to visit China.

In the past, ties between the two countries had been troubled by foreign policy differences, particularly over Cuba's strong pro-Soviet stance.

## U.S. banker proposes new trade form

NEW YORK (AP) — Chase Manhattan Corp.'s chairman says the enormous U.S. foreign trade deficit could be reduced if the United States forced foreign nations to essentially buy a dollar worth of U.S. goods for each dollar worth they wanted to sell here.

In a speech, Willard Butcher outlined a plan under which "trade certificates" would be issued to importers of U.S.-made goods.

Each certificate would be worth the value of the purchased goods, he said.

Foreigners shipping products into the United States would be required to supply the certificates having the face value of their goods. Butcher said the certificates also could trade on the open market.

Butcher said the plan could be phased in over a four-year period, initially at ratios that reflect current trade imbalances.

For example, he said, foreign exporters initially might be required only to submit \$75 or 80 worth of certificates in order to sell \$100 worth of goods to the United States, with the ratio increasing over time.

"Trade certificates would neither favour, nor discriminate against, any industry, shipper, product or country," Butcher said. "They would end up promoting trade, since the more goods that are shipped from the United States, the more that can be shipped to the United States."

The nation's foreign trade deficit totalled \$27.75 billion in the third quarter.

## China renames 'Champagne'

BEIJING (AP) — Responding to complaints from French winegrowers, China has announced that no Chinese drink will be allowed to bear the name "Champagne."

Li Xiaoping, an official from the State Industrial and Commercial Administration, said China would comply with international conventions restricting use of the word to wines grown in the Champagne province of France.

Many Chinese had believed champagne to be a generic name for sparkling white wine rather than a product special to one area of France, he said.

Quoted in the official China Daily, Li said China became a member of the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property in 1985 and would obey its stipulations on uses of the Champagne label.

He said most enterprises have been given until year's end to remove their "Champagne" labels, including those producers using related names such as "Little Champagne" or "Lady's Champagne."

In some cases, companies will be given until the end of 1990.

Li said many Chinese-made drinks with "Champagne" names are not wines but soft drinks.

## High pay increases worry British official

LONDON (R) — Average earnings in Britain rose by 9.25 per cent in the year to October and a government minister said higher wages could make British products too expensive abroad and threaten employment at home.

"Moderation in pay remains a key requirement if we are to remain competitive in world markets and not put next year's employment prospects at risk," Employment Secretary Norman Fowler said.

Unemployment fell a provisional, seasonally adjusted 15,300 in November to 1.65 million, or 5.8 per cent of the workforce, down from 5.9 per cent in October.

It was the lowest level of unemployment in nine years and the number of jobless has now declined for 40 consecutive months.

But in a blow to the government's battle against inflation, average earnings rose by 9.25 per cent in the year to October after nine per cent in the year ended in September. The annual rate was

8.75 per cent in June, July and August.

Fowler said the pay earnings rise was "out of line with that of our major overseas competitors."

Industrial production rose a provisional seasonally adjusted 0.9 per cent in October after a revised one per cent fall in September, Central Statistical Office (CSO) data showed.

The CSO also reported Britain had a provisional, seasonally adjusted current account deficit of \$6.5 billion (\$10.4 billion) in the third quarter of 1989 after a second-quarter deficit of \$5.1 billion (\$8.2 billion).

Previous CSO estimates for the third quarter had set the shortfall at \$5.82 billion (\$9.31 billion). The median market forecast was \$5.9 billion (\$9.4 billion).

Britain is labouring under a year-on-year inflation rate of 7.3 per cent and industrial workers have been clamouring for fatter wage packets to compensate for shrinking buying power.

## AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Sunday, December 17, 1989			
Central Bank official rates			
	Buy	Sell	
U.S. dollar	643.0	649.0	
Found Sterling	1029.6	1039.9	
Deutsche mark	374.6	378.3	
Swiss franc	415.4	419.6	
French franc	109.4	110.5	
Japanese yen (for 100)	446.4	450.9	
Dutch guilder	331.5	334.8	
Swedish crown	102.4	103.4	
Italian lira (for 100)	50.1	50.6	
Belgian franc (for 10)	176.3	178.1	

**THE BETTER HALF.** By Harris

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**JUMBLE.** THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

YOILD

ORRUJ

INVOIL

CHYSIP

Answer here: IT'S

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: HOARD PIKER TONGUE INHALE

Answer: Why the burlesque queen decided to run for office—SHE HAD NOTHING TO HIDE

**Peanuts**

**Mutt'n' Jeff**

**Andy Capp**







## Hanoi not to accept 'forced returnees'

BANGKOK (AP) — Vietnam has told Britain that it rejects any forced repatriation of boat people from Hong Kong and reserves the right to send them back to the British colony, official Vietnamese media reported.

In London, about 150 Vietnamese refugees demonstrated Saturday in Trafalgar Square to demand an end to the forcible repatriation.

The refugees released 51 black balloons, one for each Vietnamese sent back to Hanoi Tuesday, and hundreds of yellow balloons for the 57,000 Vietnamese still in Hong Kong.

Vietnam accepted the group of 51, but the official media said Hanoi's policy is to reject forced repatriation.

The Vietnam News Agency (VNA) said a Foreign Ministry official handed a note to British Ambassador Emrys Davies strongly affirming Hanoi's policy of "only accepting those who volunteer to return or who are not opposed to the repatriation."

The report said the ministry cautioned Davies that "any violation of these principles may hamper and even completely disrupt the process of cooperation to resolve this problem step by step" as agreed at a June multilateral conference on Indochinese refugees.

Ministry officials stressed that "if Vietnam discovers any case of 'forced repatriation,' it reserves the right to return them to Hong Kong."

A spokesman for Britain's Foreign Office in London said the Vietnamese message did not represent a change in that country's position and that there would be no change in British policy.

Britain argues most Vietnamese confined to squalid Hong Kong camps are not political refugees but illegal migrants seeking a better life.

Vietnamese refugees and their supporters in London stood silently in the rain for one minute to remember those who died and died for freedom. It was the first of a series of rallies planned around the country by the Vietnam Refugee National Council.

Protesters sang the Vietnamese national anthem used before the Communists seized power in 1975.

"We hope the British government will give freedom to the Vietnamese refugees in Hong Kong," said council chairman Diap Pham, who fled Vietnam by boat to Singapore in 1983 and arrived in England later that year.

"Repatriation is evil," guitarist Steve Hackett of the rock group Genesis told the crowd. "We urge the Hong Kong government to dismantle the fences and the compounds."

Hackett has organised musicians called Rock against Repatriation. They are making a recording of the Rod Stewart hit song "Sailing" with proceeds to alleviate conditions of the refugees in Hong Kong. It is to be released Jan. 20.

The Rev. Michael Meadows of Weymouth, who worked in the former South Vietnamese capital of Saigon, told protesters. "Our government ought not to be too glib in accepting assurances from the government of Hanoi that these people will be properly treated on their return."



An East German youth demonstrating in Leipzig holds his banner aloft. It reads "Germany my fatherland," depicting the pre-war borders.

## Gysi sees possible catastrophe in unification of two Germanys

EAST BERLIN (Agencies) — East German Communist Party leader Gregor Gysi said on Sunday that calling for union with West Germany were playing with fire and could endanger peace.

In an address to an emergency party congress, Gysi mapped out the Communist movement's vision of reforms that would include a new constitution, economic changes, a cut in military forces and greater autonomy for local regions.

"Those searching a special German route to unification outside the framework of European unity are playing, consciously or unconsciously, with fire. Greater Germany would be a victory for the right," he said.

Gysi, elected party chief a week ago, said those in the West and in East Germany demanding unification would not be satisfied with that if they got it.

They would then want those German territories relinquished after World War II and now part of Poland and the Soviet Union, he said. There have been increasing calls in recent weeks for the two German states to merge in some form.

"If the border between the two German states falls before Europe is unified then a discussion will break out about border changes," Gysi told the 2,600 delegates at the congress in the Dynamo Sports Hall on the outskirts of East Berlin.

"Peace would be seriously endangered and once again it would have been the Germans who caused a new European conflict," he added to thunderous applause.

**Opinion poll**

More than two-thirds of East Germans questioned in a poll said they oppose German reunification, the weekly news magazine Der Spiegel reported.

The poll, conducted by two respected West German public opinion research organisations, queried 1,032 East Germans of voting age in early December about their political views.

Some 71 per cent of respondents said they opposed building a common German state, the question asked in the poll commissioned by Der Spiegel and ZDF Television network.

Spiegel reported in its latest edition that only 27 per cent of respondents said they supported reunification.

The magazine did not specify the poll's margin of error or provide other polling details.

Asked who they would vote for in the first free elections in East Germany, set for May 6, 1990, about half the respondents said they were not sure yet, Spiegel said.

Another 12 per cent said they support the Communists, seven per cent said they would vote for the newly formed opposition Social Democratic Party and five per cent said they were behind Neues Forum, the largest reform movement.

## Aquino orders trial of putsch leaders

MANILA (R) — Philippine President Corason Aquino Sunday ordered the immediate trial of leaders of this month's failed coup, branding them traitors who were paid "thirty pieces of silver" to bring her down.

Aquino, speaking on pre-recorded radio programme, urged civilians to come forward with information that could help prosecute leaders of the Dec. 1-7 army revolt, in which more than 100 people were killed and at least 500 wounded.

"I order General (Renato) de Villa to immediately investigate their top leaders," she said. "I also order military courts to hold a continuous trial and I ask the people to attend the proceedings."

De Villa, the country's armed forces chief, said the military has captured 1,800 of about 3,000 mutineers who took part in the coup attempt, the sixth and bloodiest since Aquino came to power in 1986.

Aquino vowed to show no mercy to the mutineers' leaders.

"Why did the rebel troops do that contemptible act? They did it... for thirty pieces of silver," she said. "For the leaders of these rebel troops... our policy is to show them no mercy."

Aquino did not say who allegedly paid the coup leaders. The military has said unnamed financiers paid some of the rebel officers 25 million pesos (\$1.3 million) to mutiny.

The president said the coup attempt was backed by politicians who "knew they had no chance in an election." She did not identify them but last week she hinted her estranged Vice-President Salvador Laurel and Senator Juan Ponce Enrile, a former defence chief, were involved. Both have denied this.

Government troops moved into position around Manila and the southern city of Davao during the weekend to stop possible new attacks by army rebels.

## Column

### Mall apologises to black Santa

LANDOVER HILLS, Maryland (AP) — A shopping centre is asking a black Santa Claus to return, issuing a public apology to the man who quit last week because he said the Mall objected to his skin colour. Derrick L. Trice walked off the job Tuesday, saying he wouldn't return unless he received such an apology.

Trice, 21, said he confronted the Mall's managers after a Mall security guard came by his post to ask, "How long the black Santa would be around?" He said he was shown the door after an argument with Mall manager Thomas A. Breese. Officials at the Mall said the incident came about after customers — both black and white — complained about the black Santa. Trice was asked to leave the Mall office because he was very upset, according to the Mall's public statement issued Friday.

The Mall "in no way intended to convey the message that Mr. Trice's services were not wanted or that he was not welcome to return to his position as Santa Claus," said the statement issued by Breese. "If Mr. Trice received this impression, the Mall regrets that and extends its apology to Mr. Trice."

The Capital Plaza Mall continues to believe that it is appropriate to have Santas of all races. The Mall sincerely hopes that Mr. Trice will return and continue to serve its customers.

### 'Miracle' liquid is blood

NAPLES, Italy (R) — Scientists said Saturday their tests had confirmed that a substance venerated in Naples as a relic of the city's patron saint is blood. The coagulated substance, which Neapolitans believe is the blood of fourth century martyr St. Januarius, is held in two small phials in the church of Santa Chiara. It liquefies two or three times a year after prayers in the church. Neapolitans say this has happened for the past 600 years and they believe that if the miracle fails to occur a disaster could strike the city.

"There is no doubt that the liquid is blood," said Pierluigi Ballone, a Turin university scientist heading a team which was able to study the substance without removing it from the phials. However, Ballone told a news conference the scientists could not explain why the substance liquefied regularly.

### News of the '80s

NEW YORK (AP) — Mikhail S. Gorbachev and the thawing of the cold war were voted the story of the 1980s by editors and news directors of U.S. newspaper and broadcast members of the Associated Press. The American editors said other stories in the decade's top 10 were, in descending order: The AIDS epidemic, Ronald Reagan's tax-cutting presidency, the U.S. drug plague, explosion of the space shuttle Challenger, the Iran hostage crisis and other terrorist acts, the nuclear meltdown at Chernobyl, China's suppression of its democracy movement, the Iran-Contra affair, and continuing strife in Central America. In a separate AP poll last week of news editors in 44 other countries, based on a different ballot, Gorbachev's rise and the changes in Eastern Europe were voted the nos. 1 and 2 stories of the 1980s, followed by AIDS, China, Chernobyl, Environmental problems, Poland, Afghanistan, U.S.-Soviet relations, and Mideast peace efforts. Those results were based on 121 ballots from newspaper, radio, television and news agency editors on six continents.

### Global weather

(major world cities)

	DECEMBER	MAX	MIN
AMSTERDAM	12	54	41
ATHENS	15	61	47
BANGKOK	28	86	73
BATAVIA	28	86	73
BOMBAY	28	86	73
BUEENOS AIRES	19	65	57
CARACAS	24	77	64
CHICAGO	23	45	32
COPENHAGEN	08	21	14
DARWIN	28	86	73
GENEVA	08	45	32
HONG KONG	15	29	21
ISTANBUL	11	52	41
LONDON	10	50	35
LOS ANGELES	10	60	47
MADRID	15	52	41
MECCA	11	52	41
MONTREAL	08	45	32
MOSCOW	08	45	32
NEW DELHI	28	86	73
NEW YORK	08	45	32
PARIS	08	45	32
ROME	11	52	41
SEATTLE	08	45	32
SYDNEY	16	61	47
TOKYO	08	45	32
VIENNA	05	41	28

## WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

**Mail bomb kills U.S. judge**

MOUNTAIN BROOK, Alabama (AP) — A federal appeals judge was killed and his wife seriously injured by a mail bomb that went off at their home Saturday afternoon, authorities said. Eleventh U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals Judge Robert S. Vance, 58, died instantly when a package delivered to his home went off around 3 p.m. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) spokesman Chuck Steinmetz said in Washington. It was believed to be only the third time this century a U.S. federal judge had been assassinated.

**Actor Lee van Cleef dies**

OXNARD, California (AP) — Actor Lee van Cleef, whose steely eyes and hawklike features won him a long career portraying villains in western movies, has died of an apparent heart attack, authorities said. He was 64. Van Cleef's film break came when he was cast as one of four desperadoes faced down by Gary Cooper in the 1952 movie "High Noon." He became a familiar gunslinger in so-called spaghetti westerns made by Italian director Sergio Leone, including "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly." Among his hundreds of black-hat roles were parts in "How the West Was Won," "The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance" and "Death Rides a Horse." Van Cleef collapsed at his Oxnard home Friday night, said Craig Stevens, a Ventura County deputy coroner. The coastal community is north of Los Angeles.

**Bloch's FBI tail is off**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Felix S. Bloch, the American diplomat suspected of spying for the Soviets, said Saturday it appears he no longer has Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents trailing his every move. "It was strange," said Bloch, a 30-year State Department veteran who came under FBI surveillance last spring, but has never been charged with any wrongdoing. "It was as if they left from one minute to the next." FBI spokesman Charles Steinmetz acknowledged there may have been some visual changes but the investigation was continuing. "We may have cut back, but we're still investigating," he said Saturday. "I have no comments beyond that. But it is an active investigation." Meanwhile, the Los Angeles Times in Saturday's editions cited sources as saying the FBI has failed to find solid evidence to support espionage charges against Bloch and has all but abandoned hopes of prosecuting him.

**Marijuana link among tumour patients**

CLEARWATER, Florida (AP) — Marijuana smoking was the common link among a number of otherwise healthy young people who developed large, fast-growing cancerous tumours of the mouth and neck, two doctors have reported. "This was a rather shocking finding," said Dr. Paul Donald, a head and neck surgeon at the University of California-Davis, who noticed the link in nine of his patients. The patients included one man with a tumour bulging from his mouth to his chin, a woman with a tumour under her tongue and a man with a huge mass on the side of his neck. Donald told a meeting of immunologists in Clearwater.

**Chile celebrations leave one dead**

SANTIAGO (AP) — One person died, dozens were injured and hundreds arrested when jubilant street celebrations of the opposition victory in this week's presidential election turned violent Saturday, police said. One woman was killed during demonstrations in Temuco, a city 870 kilometres south of Santiago. Police did not say how the woman died, but the official news agency ORBE said she was killed when demonstrators altered the public order damaging public properties, and forced police to act. Thousands of supporters of opposition leader Patricio Aylwin took to the streets to celebrate his victory in the presidential election Thursday. Police said 589 demonstrators were arrested in Santiago alone.

**Volcano spews ash and grit**

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (R) — The Redoubt volcano in Alaska erupted again Saturday, spewing out ash for hundreds of kilometres and residents of Anchorage were told to remain indoors to avoid breathing problems. U.S. government scientists said the 3,100 metre volcano erupted at about 6:00 a.m. Alaska standard time (1500 GMT) in what is believed to be its fifth explosion since Thursday morning when it burst into activity for the first time in 21 years. The 220,000 residents of Anchorage, 160 kilometres northeast of the mountain, were told to remain indoors to avoid respiratory problems, as a dusting of the sandy ash fell on cars parked outside in the snow. Most flights in and out of the busy Anchorage international airport were cancelled because of fears aircraft engines would suck in the grit, a spokesman for the Federal Aviation Administration said.

**Medellin cartel baron buried**

BOGOTA (R) — Colombian drug baron Jose Gonzalo Rodriguez Gacha, who rose from poverty to the number two man in the world's most powerful drug organisation, was buried Saturday in a common grave with his teenage son and five bodyguards, all killed in a gunbattle with police. Rodriguez Gacha, 42, his son and his bodyguards were shot dead Friday after resisting arrest by hurling grenades and spraying machine-gun fire when cornered near Tolu on the Caribbean coast. They were buried in a hastily dug common grave in the municipal cemetery in the nearby state capital of Sincelejo without relatives present, television footage showed.

## Hijacked jetliner flown back to Beijing

BEIJING (Agencies) — A Chinese airliner hijacked to Japan by a knife-wielding man flew back to Beijing Sunday, with the hijacker's wife and 10-year-old son on board.

Police and airline officials said they did not know the status of the wife and child, but foreign reporters saw her led from the plane in handcuffs.

Chinese President Yang Shangkun, at a brief news conference before setting out on an 11-day trip to the Middle East, thanked Japanese authorities for their cooperation in ending the hijacking.

The Air China Boeing 747 was heading from Beijing to New York Saturday morning when Zhang Zhenhai, who had a knife and claimed to have a bomb, ordered the pilot to fly to South Korea. South Korea refused permission to land, and the pilot diverted to Fukuoka, 900 kilometres southwest of Tokyo.

The Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) said Zhang told Fukuoka police that he took part in the spring democracy movement in Beijing, and was sick of living in China after the movement was violently crushed in June.

Yang said, "as for the motive of the hijacker, I have not asked about it and I'm not clear about it."

"But since China is so big and the population is so large, I don't think it's strange that it happens that some people want to flee to other places such as Taiwan or to other countries," Japanese police said Zhang's wife, whose name has not been released, said she wanted to return to China.

The hijacker is in hospital in Fukuoka with a broken back and broken legs apparently sustained when he was pushed from the plane after it had landed.

The hijacking ended when Zhang was apparently pushed out of the open door of the plane as it stood on the tarmac of Fukuoka airport. He was taken to hospital in Fukuoka in serious condition with his back and both legs broken.

"I saw him pushed out of the plane," a Chinese passenger told reporters as he boarded a bus, at Peking airport.

He said he did not know who pushed the man out but a crew member was quoted in Japan as saying it was a passenger.

A man in his forties, who was on his way to New York, said he saw no scuffles on board as the plane was diverted to Japan.

"I didn't realise we had been hijacked until we got to Fukuoka," he said.

Chinese aviation officials declined to talk to reporters and it was not known how many of the passengers and crew returned to Peking. Most passengers declined to comment as they were escorted past reporters by airport officials.

But in Tokyo, government sources said the aircraft left with 208 of the 223 passengers and crew on board.

The others, apart from Zhang, would continue their journey to the United States, they added.

Japanese police quoted Zhang as saying he had left a bomb in an unnamed Peking hotel. Chinese police and security officers were patrolling hotels around the city but there were no reports that any explosive device had been found.

Television reports in Japan said the decision to repatriate the hijackers was to prevent a worsening of relations.

Japanese Transport Ministry officials said Japan allowed the plane to land because the captain said he had only 40 minutes worth of fuel.

The Chinese embassy in Tokyo said it had contacted the Japanese Foreign Ministry to demand that the hijackers and the plane immediately be returned to China.

**Comoros mercenaries leave South Africa**

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Eighteen of the 22 white mercenaries who relinquished power in the Comoro Islands Friday to French forces have left South Africa for Europe, a Foreign Ministry spokeswoman said Sunday.

The spokeswoman declined to state the destination of the soldiers of fortune, who took control of the Indian Ocean islands after the assassination of President Ahmad Abdallah in mysterious circumstances Nov. 26.

Mercenary leader Bob Denard was one of the four remaining in South Africa, pending the outcome of negotiations on his future, the spokeswoman added. "We anticipate all of the remaining four will be leaving South Africa soon," she said.

Denard and his men flew to Johannesburg Friday as pressure mounted on them to leave the Comoros amid accusations that they were involved in Abdallah's murder.

Pretoria's Foreign Minister Pik Botha immediately declared that the 22 mercenaries were unwelcome and said they would leave for other countries as quickly as possible.

South Africa, which with France has the strongest foreign influence on the Comoros, said it wanted to keep its involvement with the departing mercenaries as low-key as possible.

Denard's fate is the trickiest. If he returns to France, he risks deportation to the West African state of Benin, where he faces murder charges for his part in an unsuccessful coup attempt.

Denard and his men handed over power in the Comoros last Friday to a French military task force, which is to stay in the islands off the Madagascar coast for two years to train local security forces.

Newspapers reported that Denard and his men had spent their time since arriving in South Africa having a marathon party.

The Johannesburg Sunday Times said the mercenaries drank cases of champagne and ate tins of Russian caviar which they managed to "liberate" during their retreat from the Comoros.

After the luxury foods ran out, the men switched to South African wines and beer to wash down cold meats and salads.

Denard and the three remaining mercenaries were being held under close guard in a house in Pretoria, according to the newspaper reports.

French police detained six of the mercenaries as they arrived Sunday at Orly Airport from South Africa.

The six, five Frenchmen and a Belgian, will be held until investigators determine whether they are wanted for any crimes, a spokeswoman for the air and border police said.

## Havel-Dubcek accord seen over presidency

PRAGUE (Agencies) — Opposition leader Vaclav Havel has signalled a possible agreement with Alexander Dubcek to avoid a fight over the presidency, saying he would only serve in the post if Dubcek gets a top government role.

In a televised speech, the once-banned playwright declared Saturday that he would accept the presidency only temporarily, until someone can be elected for the five-year term by "a freely elected new federal assembly."

He said he would only serve if "next to me, whatever his official function may be, will be Alexander Dubcek ... I will not allow any dark forces to put a wedge between me and him and therefore between the Czechs and Slovaks."

Dubcek, leader of the 1968 "Prague spring" reforms, had been considered Havel's main rival for the largely ceremonial post.

The vacancy was created a week ago when hardline communist Gustav Husak resigned after swearing in the country's first non-Communist dominated government since 1948.

The new government came to power on a wave of democratic reform triggered by mass protests in the capital and other cities in which millions demanded political change. The Communists have ousted hardline leaders, surrendered their monopoly on power and allowed free travel.

Rumours circulating widely in Prague suggested that Dubcek, expelled from the Communist Party in 1969 after the Soviet-led invasion that crushed his reforms, had agreed to accept the chairmanship of parliament in exchange for supporting Havel.

It was unclear whether Dubcek would support Havel or simply not compete for president. Another presidential contender is Cestmir Cisar, the candidate of the Czechoslovak Socialist Youth Union.

Dubcek, on his way to a dinner Saturday given by visiting Italian socialist leader Bettino Craxi, said he and Havel had "been together from the very start."

Leaders from Czechoslovakia's small Socialist and People's parties joined Havel and Dubcek at the Italian embassy.

Opposition Civic Forum spokesman Petr Kucera, speaking at a news conference earlier, said Havel and Dubcek had met Saturday, and "both parties left assuming that agreement was reached for joint action."

Kucera declined to say exactly when Dubcek, Havel and a close circle of advisers met or provide details on what sort of action was planned.

Havel's speech directly addressed the Communist deputies who dominate Czechoslovakia's parliament and, under the constitution, must elect a new head of state by Dec. 14.

"If they don't want to risk strikes, chaos and international shame, I plead with them not to complicate the situation and not to expose themselves to the danger of being condemned by the public, but to understand the call of this moment," Havel said.

"Very soon, we should have someone suitable in the (presidential) castle, preferably before the end of this year," he said.

Havel said the temporary president's role would be to guide the country to free elections and oversee democratic reforms in the totalitarian system that has kept Czechoslovakia in an iron grip for four decades.

The Communist-dominated federal assembly, Czechoslovakia's parliament, is scheduled to meet Tuesday.



Vaclav Havel

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